



MARCH CURRENT AFFAIRS - 2020

NATIONAL NEWS

1. According to the first ever ranking of 28 states and 8 UTs released by central govt on the basis of direct benefit transfer (DBT) payout, Haryana has topped in terms of DBT payout with Rs 4,782 crores payment in 2019-20.

- West Bengal is the worst performing state at the 36th position. The state does not implement several central schemes in which subsidies are involved.
- Govt has claimed to save nearly Rs 28,700 crore in the first nine months of 2019-20 through DBT.
- Through the Central DBT schemes, central govt has disbursed over Rs 2.25 lakh crores through 439 schemes run by 56 ministries and departments in 2019-20.

Note: - In the picture, Uttar Pradesh has the highest amount of DBT payouts and number of transactions. However, Haryana has been given the 1st rank, which I found in every news article. Therefore, the rankings are little ambiguous. Focus on the ranks of states instead of the number of transactions and amount.

2. Himachal Pradesh has become the first state in India to have 100% LPG coverage under the PM Ujjawala Scheme (PMUY).

- 'Himachal Grihini Suvidha Yojana' was launched in 2018 to provide LPG connections to the remaining households which are left in the PMUY.

Note: PMUY scheme has been covered in detail in ESI >> Govt scheme.

3. According to a progress report 'Transforming Nutrition in India: Poshan Abhiyan', released by the NITI Aayog, 1 in 3 Aadhaar-based payments made under the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) was credited to a wrong bank account.

- Out of the 31.29 lakh Aadhaar-based payments, 28% are going to different bank accounts than what had been provided by the beneficiaries.
- Only 66% of the direct benefit transfers were based on Aadhaar.
- NITI Aayog has proposed "rationalise" the mandatory waiting period of 180 days before the second instalment is released as well as the compulsory birth certificate for the release of the third instalment.
- In this report, states were ranked on the basis of their readiness to implement the Poshan Abhiyan across four themes: governance and institutional mechanism; strategy and planning; service delivery and capacities; and programme activities and intervention coverage.
- Jammu & Kashmir is considered as a state.

4. J&K govt along with AICTE signed MoU with 4 IITs (Guwahati, Ropar, Pune, and Bhubaneswar) and 3 Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISERs of Orrisa, Pune and Kolkata).

- Purpose of MoU: To provide a two-month internship to 500 final year students of J&K during the 2020-21 academic session.
- It is the first-of-a-kind internship initiative where the travelling expenses of students will be funded by the Ministry of HRD through AICTE while the hostel and tuition expenses will be borne by the host institutions.



5. International Conference on Banana (ICB) 2020 was held in Trichy, Tamil Nadu.
 - Award: - Dr N Kumar (Vice-Chancellor of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University) was awarded with 'Lifetime Achievement Award' given by ICAR-National Research Centre for Banana.
 - Organizer: - ICAR-National Research Center for Banana, Bioversity International (Rome)- International Center for Tropical Agriculture.
 - Theme: - Innovations in Sustainable Production and Value Chain Management in Banana.

6. Ministry for Human Resource Development has launched the "Higher Education Leadership Development Programme for Administrator".
 - University Grants Commission (UGC) and British Council under the UK-India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI) have jointly launched this initiative.
 - Objective: - to train the senior and middle level academic administrators to bring about systemic changes in Universities in India.

7. National Cyber Research, Innovation and Capacity Centre has been inaugurated at Central Detective Training Institute (CDTI) in Hyderabad, Telangana to combat cyber threats.
 - This centre has been set up by the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D) under Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C).
 - It is one of the 7 major units to be established under I4C.Note: - I4C is discussed in July Spotlight (National News).

8. First-ever National conference on Coastal Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience was organized by the National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) in Delhi.

9. International conference on "Ensemble Methods in Modelling and Data Assimilation" (EMMDA) has been organized in Noida, Uttar Pradesh.
 - Organizer: - National Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasting under Ministry of Earth Sciences
 - There were 6 key themes of the conference.

10. 16th Joint Ministerial Commission of India and Australia was held in New Delhi.
 - Indian Minister of Railways and Commerce & Industry Shri Piyush Goyal and Simon Birmingham - Minister of Trade, Tourism and Investment of Australia have co-chaired the meeting.

11. ISRO and NASA have collaborated to launch the NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) mission in 2022 from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.
 - It is the world's first dual-frequency synthetic aperture radar on an Earth observation satellite which will use radar imaging in dual frequencies (L and S Band).
 - Purpose: - It will collect 100 terabytes of data per day and use AI to analyse Earth's ecosystem disturbances, ice-sheet collapse, natural disasters.
 - Budget: - ISRO - 788 crore and NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) - over \$800 million.
 - Amazon's Alexa will help the scientists in organizing daily tasks in this mission.

12. US First Lady Melania Trump had attended a 'Happiness Class' at a govt school in South Delhi.

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- Aam Aadmi Party had launched the concept of 'Happiness Class' in 2018 to burst the stress of students in Delhi.
13. During the foundation day celebrations of Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) on 24 Feb, Minister of State for Labour & Employment and Chairman of ESIC - Santosh Kumar Gangwar - has announced a ESIC Special Services Fortnight from 24.02.2020 to 10.03.2020.
- 'Santusht' mobile App will be soon launched for the benefit of ESI beneficiaries.
 - Monthly contribution of employers in the ESI Scheme has been reduced from 4.75% to 3.25% and employees contribution has been reduced from 1.75% to 0.75%.
14. Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) has launched three new systems for climate forecast for the benefit of fishermen, people living in coastal areas of South India and others.
- First - Small Advisory and Forecast Services System (SVAS) to warn about the potential zones where boat can overturn, 10 days in advance. It is based on Boat Safety Index (BSI).
 - Second - Swell Surge Forecast System (SSFs) to predict about the sea surges (aka Kallakkadal in Kerala) in the coastal region.
 - Third - Algal Bloom Information Service (ABIS) to warn about the harmful algal blooms (the spread of phytoplankton blooms) that are harmful for fisheries and coastal population (causing them respiratory problems).
15. World's largest species of cave fish - *Tor putitora* - has been found in Jaintia Hills, Meghalaya by a team of experts from UK, Switzerland and India.
- The fish (over 40 cm) has no eyes and is white due to lack of melanin pigmentation.
 - The study was published in the Cave and Karst Science journal, published by British Cave Research Association.
 - "Caving in the Abode of the Clouds" project was started in 1992 to explore and map the caves of Meghalaya.
16. According to the National Health Authority's analysis on the portability feature, 81,254 patients are availing the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana- Ayushman Bharat (PM- JAY) benefits.
- Madhya Pradesh has topped the list for outgoing patients at a number of at least 11,765.
 - Under the PM-JAY, patients can avail the benefits across the states under 'portability' option. MP has sent most of its patients to Gujarat.
17. Union Cabinet has ordered to implement 37 central laws mentioned in the concurrent list in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir.
- The order has been issued under the Section 96 of Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019.
18. Union Cabinet has approved the National Institutes of Food Technology, Entrepreneurship & Management (NIFTEM) Bill, 2019 to grant the status of national importance to two food technology institutes in Haryana and Tamil Nadu.
- National Institutes of Food Technology in (Kundli, Haryana and Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu) will be given the special status.
19. Union cabinet has amended the "Laccadive, Minicoy and Amindivi Islands Land Revenue and



Tenancy Regulation, 1965" to give occupancy rights to the Scheduled Tribe (ST) population of Lakshadweep.

- Lakshadweep Governor - Dineshwar Sharma

20. Union Cabinet has approved three MoU signed between India and Myanmar for cooperation in the field of combating timber trafficking, conservation of tigers & other wildlife, and petroleum products and communications.

- As part of the MoU on petroleum products, India and Myanmar will establish a joint working group.

21. Minister of Minister of Food Processing Industries has launched the first-of-its-kind Market Intelligence and Early Warning System (MIEWS) Portal to monitor the prices of TOP Crops (Tomato, Onion and Potato).

- MIEWS portal would help in planning and timely intervention for price stabilisation.

22. Govt has approved five projects worth Rs 426 crore and a grant of Rs 162 crore for the Operation Greens scheme.

In the budget speech of Union Budget 2018-19, a new Scheme "Operation Greens" was launched under the Ministry of Food Processing to promote TOP farmers, producers organisations, agri-logistics, processing facilities and professional management.

Total budget - Rs 500 crore

The scheme has two components - Short term Price Stabilisation Measures and Long Term Integrated value chain development projects.

NAFED is the nodal agency for implementing price stabilization measures.

23. Atal Innovation Mission of NITI Aayog has partnered with NASSCOM to launch the artificial intelligence (AI) based module in schools.

- As part of the partnership, 5000 Atal Tinkering Labs will get AI kits to benefit the 2.5 million students.

24. International Conference on Standardisation of Diagnosis and Terminologies in Ayurveda, Unani and Siddha Systems of Medicine (ICoSDiTAUS-2020) was held in New Delhi to emphasize the potential of traditional medicine.

- Organizer: - Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa Rigpa and Homoeopathy (AYUSH) and WHO.
- 16 countries participated in the biggest international conference on standardisation of Diagnosis and Terminologies of Traditional Medicine.

25. National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) has released its 1st NCAER Land Records and Services Index 2019-20.

- Top ranker - Madhya Pradesh (score - 74.9) followed by Odisha (67.5) and Maharashtra (65.3).
- Bottom ranker-Ladakh UT (score - 2)
- Total states and UTs ranked - 33
- Parameters - under the NCAER Land Policy Initiative (NLPI) are: -

26. Under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana, central govt has approved 32 projects across 17 states that will leverage investment Rs 406 crore.

Note: - the scheme is covered in ESI » Govt Schemes.

27. New Light Combat Helicopter Production Facility, with a capacity to manufacture 30 LCH in a year, has been inaugurated at the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited's (HAL) complex in Bengaluru, Karnataka (HQ of HAL).

- HAL Chairman - R. Madhavan

28. Minister of Tribal Affairs - Arjun Munda - has launched the "Programme for Capacity Building of Scheduled Tribe Representatives in Local Self Governments" in Bhubneshwar, Odisha to increase the participation of STs in local self govt bodies.

- He also launched "1000 Spring Initiatives" and an online portal on Spring Atlas (to provide spring data).
- Purpose of "1000 Spring Initiatives" - The initiative will help in increasing the potential of perennial springs' to address natural scarcity of water in tribal areas.
- Training under Spring initiative - youth from three districts of Odisha - Kalahandi, Khandamal and Gajapati - were trained for identification and mapping of springs, and undertaking rejuvenation and protection measures in their habitations.

29. "Yard 45006 VAJRA" - 6th offshore patrol vessel - was manufactured by Larsen & Toubro (L&T) under the 'Make in India' initiative and it was launched in Chennai to enhance coastal security.

- A total of 7 OPVs will be developed by L&T.

32.1) L&T also delivered 5th offshore patrol vessel - 'ICGS Varad' - to Indian Coast Guard in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

- ICGS Varad has become the first major defence ship to clear all sea acceptance trials in a single sea sortie.

33. Maharashtra's govt has announced to rename its "Smart gram yojana" after former Deputy CM late Raosaheb Ramrao Patil.

- Smart gram yojana was launched in 2016 in Maharashtra to increase the performance of gram panchayats at taluka and district level.
- Also, the scheme aims to develop the rural areas of Maharashtra.

34. 19th World Productivity Congress will be organized in Bangalore, Karnataka in May 2020. Last time, WPC was held in India in 1974.

- Theme: Industry 4.0 - Innovation And Productivity
- Organizer: World Confederation of Productivity Science (HQ- Montreal, Canada since 1969) and PDA Trade Fairs Pvt Ltd.
- The theme reflects the Fourth Industrial Revolution which is based on "cyber-physical systems" that merge the capabilities of humans and machines.

35. New Zealand's Deputy PM and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Winston Raymond Peters has visited India.

- Before his arrival, "India-New Zealand 2025: Investing in the relationship" report detailing about the six relationship goals of New Zealand with India was released.



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- FICCI had organized the India-New Zealand Business Forum 2020 in New Delhi, attended by Mr David Parker (Minister for Trade and Export Growth, New Zealand).
36. Indian Railways has launched its First "Restaurant on Wheels" at Asansol Station, West Bengal for railway passengers and citizens of the city.
- The restaurant aims to generate Rs 50 lakhs of non-fare revenue during next 5 years.
37. First ever "Nimad Chilli Festival 2020" (locally known as 'Mirch Mahotsav') was organised in Khargone district, Madhya Pradesh to promote chilli production (particularly Nimari brand of chilli).
- Mascot - chilli chacha - has been launched to increase the chilli production in MP.
 - Khargone is the largest chilli producing district in Madhya Pradesh as well as the largest chilli mandi of Asia.
38. In its budget 2020-21, Punjab govt has allocated ^100 crore for giving 10 lakh free smartphones to the youth.
- Also the retirement age of state government employees has been reduced to 58 from 60.
39. Before COP 13 of Conservation of Migratory Species, Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) had, for the first time, compiled a list of total migratory animals present in India.
- After COP 13, the total number of migratory species from India that are listed on CMS is 457, out of which 83% (380 species) are birds.
 - COP 13 has added 6 new Indian migratory species on the CMS appendices which are Asian elephant, Great Indian Bustard, Bengal Florican, Oceanic white-top shark, Urial and smooth hammerhead shark.
 - Globally, more than 650 species are listed on CMS out of which India accounts for 457.
 - ZSI has pegged the total number of migratory species in India at 451. The bird family Muscipidae has the highest number of migratory species.
40. According to a study published in the Water Policy journal, 8 towns out of the 13 towns that were surveyed in the Himalayan region of Bangladesh, Nepal, India and Pakistan were facing water deficiency of 20%-70%.
- As per the study, the demand-supply gap of water may double by 2050.
 - Presently, only 3% of the total Hindu Kush Himalayan population lives in larger cities and 8% in smaller towns, but projections show that over 50% of the population will be living in cities by 2050, which will put "tremendous stress" on water resources.
41. Indian Navy has decided to cut down on the requirement of minesweepers from 12 to 8 and additional P-8I long-range patrol aircraft from 10 to 6.
- Reason: - Its reduced share in the Defence budget for the Indian Navy at ^26,688 crore against its committed liabilities of ^45,000 crore.
 - Indian Navy is procuring 10 General Atomics Seaguardian High Altitude Long Endurance (HALE) armed drones from the U.S. for maritime surveillance.
 - Navy is planning to procure the second Indigenous Aircraft Carrier (IAC-II) for ^45,000 crore.
 - Navy is also procuring six additional Boeing P-8I aircraft and 13 BAE Systems MK45 naval guns from USA.
42. High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (HEMRL - DRDO's lab) Pune and IISc- Bangalore have



jointly developed the RaIDer-X device which can detect explosives in both pure as well as contaminated forms from a standoff distance.

- It was unveiled during the National Workshop on Explosive Detection (NWED-2020) in Pune.
- The workshop was organized by HEMRL Pune on its 25th anniversary.

43. India has won the contract for supplying 4 SWATHI weapon-locating radars to Armenia (country located in Europe) for \$40 million.

- DRDO has developed the radars and Bharat Electronics Ltd has manufactured them.

Defence Exports Targets: -

44. Indian Air Force and Savitribai Phule Pune University have signed an MoU to establish the "Marshal of the Air Force Arjan Singh Chair of Excellence" at Department of Defence & Strategic Studies in the university.

- Purpose: - to enable IAF officers to pursue research and higher studies in the area of National Defence and allied fields of Indian Air Force.

45. PM Narendra Modi has launched the 10,000 farmer produce organizations at Chitrakoot in Uttar Pradesh to provide technology, quality seed, fertilizers and pesticides including requisite finances to farmers.

- PM also launched a saturation drive for distribution of Kisan Credit Cards (KCC) to all the beneficiaries under the PM-KISAN Scheme.
- Over 6.5 Crore of the approx. 8.5 Crore beneficiaries under PM-KISAN Scheme, possess the Kisan Credit Cards.

Note: details of farmer produce organizations scheme is covered in February 16-23 doc. PM- KISAN Scheme is covered in Government schemes 2019 document.

46. PM Narendra Modi attended the Samajik Adhikarita Shivar - biggest ever distribution camp in terms of the number of beneficiaries covered - organised by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment at Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh.

- The camp was organized to distribute 56,000 assistive aids and devices to 26,000 Senior Citizens and Divyangjans (PwD) under the Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana.

Note: - Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana has been covered in ESI >> Govt scheme >> Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment document.

47. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla has launched the "Suposhit Maa Abhiyan" in his constituency in Kota (Rajasthan) to provide nutritional support to pregnant women and adolescent girls.

- In the Phase 1, 1,000 kits of 17 kg balanced diet were provided to 1,000 pregnant women.

48. Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has signed an MoU with Patanjali Bio Research Institute (PBRI) to increase research in the field of agriculture.

- ICAR's Director General - Trilochan Mohapatra
- PBRI's CEO - Acharya Balkrishna.

49. Krishi Vigyan Mela 2020 was organized in New Delhi by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).

- 11th National Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Conference was also held in New Delhi.
- First KVK was established in 1974 at Puducherry.

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50. Historic City Chowk (in Jammu) has been renamed as 'Bharat Mata Chowk'.
- The starting point of the circular road (near Panjtirthi in Jammu) has been named as 'Atal Chowk' in the memory of former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
51. Rajya Sabha MP Kamakhya Prasad Tasa informed Parliament that funds are being provided to the Kaziranga National Park under the CAMPA Act, 2016.
- Govt has set up Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority to regulate the afforestation funds.
 - Besides this, Rs 33 crore was also given to Kaziranga under Project Tiger scheme.
52. Indian Government has proposed two monuments - Dholavira: A Harappan City and Monuments and Forts of Deccan Sultanate (which includes 4 monuments) - to be included in World Heritage List of 2020.
- Dholavira is located in Kutch Desert Wildlife Sanctuary - largest wildlife sanctuary in India in terms of area.
 - 'Flamingo City' which is the only breeding site for flamingos in Asia is also located in Kutch.
53. During its 19th foundation day, Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) has launched star rating programme for Light Commercial Air Conditioners and Deep Freezers under the Energy Conservation Act, 2001.
- BEE, in collaboration with World Resources Institute, launched Urja Dakshata Information Tool (UDIT) to aware users about the energy efficiency platforms in India.
54. National Chambal sanctuary (in Madhya Pradesh) has been declared as an eco-sensitive zone by the central government.
- Gharials, Gangetic dolphins and freshwater turtles are among the major species found in this sanctuary.
 - More than 75% of the Gharial population (which is critically endangered) is based in the sanctuary.
 - Implication - corporates will now be forbidden to construct hotels or resorts in the region which will help maintain distance between the human settlement and the sanctuary.
55. According to the Ministry of Jal Shakti's data presented in the Rajya Sabha, nine districts in Delhi had contaminated groundwater in 2019.
- At least 30 districts in the National Capital Region (which includes parts of Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh apart from Delhi) had some form of pollutants in their groundwater.
56. Punjab Cabinet has approved to introduce Punjab Lokayukta Bill, 2020 to repeal the existing Lokpal Act 1996.
- The new bill will be applicable on the Chief Minister, Ministers, non-officials of all public offices to curb corruption.
57. For the first time, the benefits of Kisan Credit Cards (KCC) have been extended to the farmers of pisciculture (rearing of fish) in Rajasthan for providing short-term loans to them.
- KCC will cover the cost of establishing the fisheries units and their maintenance for these farmers.



- In July 2019, govt extended the facility of KCC to fisheries and animal husbandry farmers to help them meet their working capital needs.

58. Punjab, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu had requested PM Narendra Modi to include them in Atal Bhujal Yojana. But the Government decided not to include them under the scheme.

- The scheme is being implemented in 7 states - Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh during 2020-21 and 2024-25.

Note: - the scheme is covered in December Spotlight >> National News (page no- 32)

59. Delhi and Ahmedabad have topped in the average consumption of added fats according to an analysis of food habits of the citizens of India conducted by Indian Council of Medical Research.

- The study said that vegetarians consume more fat than non-vegetarians.
- The survey is based on the National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau's data.
- People in the age group of 36 to 59 had the highest intake of added fat at 36.1 gram per person in a day and children under-5 had the least intake (15.7/g/person/day).

60. Govt has launched the PM Kisan Mobile App on the 1st anniversary of PM Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme on February 24, 2020.

- Purpose: to connect better with farmers and fasten the process of doubling farmers' income by 2022. [scheme is covered in ESI » govt schemes]

61. Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) has installed 10 lakh smart meters across India under the Smart Meter National Programme (being implemented by the EESL).

- Budget 2020 allocates Rs 22,000 crore for the power and renewable energy sector and urged the states to implement smart meters in 3 years.
- According to the Power and Renewable Energy Minister - R K Singh, distribution of over 36 crore LED bulbs by EESL has resulted in a reduction of carbon dioxide emissions by 80 million tonnes every year under UJALA scheme (largest domestic lighting project).
- EESL is a joint venture of PSUs under the Ministry of Power and was established in 2009.
- RK Singh has also announced the commissioning of 100 megawatt of decentralised solar power plants connected to agriculture feeders in Maharashtra.

62. Ministry of Home Affairs has approved an amendment to the Arms Act, 1959 and Arms Rules, 2016 to allow renowned shooters and international medallists to keep :-

63. A workshop "Enabling Procedures for Increase of Steel Usage for the Growth of Economy" has been organized by Ministry of Steel, CM and Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (Japan) in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

- India and Japan explored the opportunities to make Odisha - the center of Mission Purvodaya in the steel sector.
- Kalinga Nagar (in Odisha) has been selected to establish the steel hub due to its strategic location.

=> Odisha is India's highest steel producing state. By 2030, Odisha's steel production alone is set to cross 100 million tonnes per annum (MTPA).

=> Launched in Jan 2020, PURVODAYA - mission for accelerated development of eastern India through integrated steel hub - was set up in Kolkata, West Bengal which encompassed 4 states - Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal.

Note: - Mission Purvodaya is covered in Jan Spotlight 2020.

64. Odisha has conducted the 4th edition of dolphin census in the Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary (which is located inside the Bhitarkanika National Park in Odisha).
- Gahirmatha is the largest breeding place of sea turtles in the world.
 - Dolphin has been included in Schedule I of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972, Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and in Appendix II of the Convention on Migratory Species.
65. 108th Indian Science Congress will be held at the Symbiosis International University's Lavale campus in Pune in 2021.
- Theme: Science and Technology for Sustainable Development with Women Empowerment.
 - Dr Vijay Laxmi Saxena has been elected as the general president of the Indian Science Congress, 2021.
66. Minister of State for Tourism & Culture - Prahlad Singh Patel - has launched 'Incredible India' website and mobile app in Chinese, Arabic and Spanish languages to boost tourism.
- Earlier, the website was available in English and Hindi only.
67. Sree Chitra Thirunal Institute of Medical Science and Technology (SCTIMST) has developed 'Chitra Flow Diverter' intracranial stent for treating aneurysms of brain.
- SCTIMST is an institute under the aegis of Department of Science and Technology located in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.
 - Aneurysms causes enlargement of arteries in the brain due to weakening of inner vessels.
68. Tamil Nadu CM - Edappadi K. Palaniswami - has launched Tamil Nadu Health System Reform Programme (TNHSRP) for 5 years to improve the management of non- communicable diseases and remove inequalities in healthcare services in the state.
- Total cost of the project is Rs 2,857 crores out of which Rs 1999 crores is funded by World Bank.
 - It is the first Program-for-Results project of the World Bank in India and the first program for Tamil Nadu.
69. Tripura govt and Airport Authority of India (as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility) have signed an Moll for construction of six equipment hiring centres in Tripura.
- Purpose: the centres will lend the equipment to farmers, self-help groups at a minimal cost.
70. Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) will be established under section 10 (1) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 which replace the Consumer Protection Act, 1986.
- Function - CCPA will protect the rights of the consumer and inquire into the cases of unfair trade practices, and false and misleading advertisements etc.
 - Section 20 of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 gives powers to the proposed authority to recall/withdraw goods or services that are "dangerous, hazardous or unsafe for the customers".
 - Section 21 - gives the powers to the CCPA to crack down on false or misleading advertisements. Penalties for harmful products under the new act: -
71. Uttar Pradesh has announced to pay Rs 900 per month to farmers who will provide shelter to stray cattle.



- Problem - increasing population of stray cattle destroy the crops and cause traffic menace.
- Solution - UP govt had launched the "Chief Minister Destitute Cow Participation Scheme" in 2019 to provide Rs 900 to farmers who shall adopt cows from shelter homes and take them home. Now, this assistance is being extended to all individuals who are willing to keep stray cattle in their homes.

72. Ministry of Tribal Affairs has set up a committee, headed by NC Saxena, to examine the Community Forest Resources (CFR) Guidelines, 2016 and suggest measures to simplify them.

- The Committee has been constituted under Forest Rights Act, 2006.

73. Agricultural and Processed Food Export Development Authority (APEDA) has signed MoU with following institutions to implement the Agriculture Policy, 2018.

- The policy aims to double farmers income by 2022 by increasing agricultural exports.

74. Union Cabinet has permitted 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Air India Ltd by Non-resident Indians, who are Indian Nationals, through automatic route.

- As per the present FDI Policy, 100% FDI is permitted in scheduled Air Transport Service/Domestic Scheduled Passenger Airline (through automatic route up to 49% and through government route beyond 49%).
- However, 100% FDI is permitted under automatic route in Scheduled Air Transport Service/Domestic Scheduled Passenger Airline for NRIs.

75. In its budget 2020-21, Jharkhand has proposed to set up a 'Jharkhand Rajya Kisan Rahat Kosh' (farmers relief fund) from this Kharif season, changing the form of PM Fasal Bima Yojana.

- Budgetary allocation for the same is Rs 100 crore.
- Rs 30 crore has been allocated under the "Mukhya Mantri Vishes Chhatra Vriti Yojana" (CM Special Students Scholarship), to give scholarship to all students of Class I to XII of the government schools.
- Govt has introduced the "Short Term Agriculture Loan Relief Yojana" at Rs 2,000 crore cost for 2020-21.
- "Baba Saheb Ambedkar Awas Yojana" - launched in 2016 to provide housing to widows - has been given Rs 4,199 crore for constructing five thousand housing units.

76. National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) and IIT-Hyderabad have signed an agreement to support start-ups through a joint incubation programme and set up an innovation and incubation centre.

- i-TIC foundation of IIT-Hyderabad signed the pact.
- NMDC will contribute Rs 10 crore for this programme and to support at least 15 start-ups.

77. 35th edition of AAHAR - the Food and Hospitality fair has been organized by India Trade Promotion Organisation, Ministry of Food Processing Industries, and Agriculture and Processed Food Products Development Authority in New Delhi.

78. On the International Women's Day (March 8), Ministry of Finance has announced the outcomes of its various schemes and the number of women beneficiaries covered under the schemes. [All the schemes have been covered in ESI >> Govt scheme >> Ministry of Finance doc]



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79. Union government has allowed all airlines operating in India to provide in-flight wi-fi services to its passengers.
- Vistara CEO Leslie Thng has announced that it would be the first plane in India to provide in-flight Wi-Fi services.
80. Central govt has approved the Genome India Project (worth Rs 238 crore) to map the genes of India population to fight genetic/hereditary diseases.
- Centre for Brain Research (under IISc-Bangalore) will be the nodal agency in the project.
 - 20 institutions will participate in it.
81. Google has announced to open Delhi cloud region - its 2nd cloud region in India after Mumbai in 2017 - to avoid disruptions in network.
- Google's existing network has eight cloud regions in the Asia-Pacific, and 22 regions globally.
 - Delhi's cloud region will be launched in 2021.
82. Tamil Nadu Food Safety and Drug Administration has recently asked the temple administrators to obtain BHOG certificate from FSSAI to ensure the hygiene of oblations being offered to deities and devotees.
- BHOG (Blissful Hygiene Offering to God) certification project was launched in 2018.
83. Economic Times Global Business Summit 2020 was held in New Delhi on the theme of 'Collaborate to Create: Sustainable Growth in a Fractured World'.
- Organizer: ET and YES Bank.
84. Supreme court bench, headed by Rohinton F Nariman, has scrapped the 2018 circular of RBI which banned the use of Cryptocurrency by banks.
- However, banks have been directed to remain cautious about cryptocurrency and digital payment instruments.
 - Banning of Cryptocurrency and Regulation of official Digital Currency Bill, 2019 is still pending in the parliament.
85. Chandrayaan 3 will be launched in the first half of 2021.
- 4 biological and 2 physical science experiments related to micro-gravity will be conducted during Gaganyaan project, according to Jitendra Singh (Minister of State, in PM's Office).
86. International Conference on Nano-Science and Nano Technology (ICONSAT) was organized by Department of Science of Technology in Kolkata, West Bengal.
- Nano-science includes 5Ms — Material, Mechanical, Manufacturing, Manpower and Machines.
87. Parliament has passed The Mineral Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020 for amending the Mines & Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act 1957 (MMDR Act) and The Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015 (CMSP Act).
- The Bill replaces the ordinance for amendment of the MMDR Act 1957 and CMSP Act which was promulgated on 10th January 2020.
- Key Provisions of the Bill: -
- ◆ Eligibility of companies for participation in coal/lignite auctions: - All companies have been allowed for participating in the auction.



- ◆ Removal of restriction on end-use of coal: The Bill removes the restriction on the use of coal mined by such companies.
 - o Thus, these companies will be allowed to carry on coal mining operation for own consumption, sale or for any other purposes, as may be specified by the central government.
- ◆ Composite license for prospecting and mining: The Bill adds a new type of license, called prospecting license-cum-mining lease. It will be a composite license providing for both prospecting and mining activities.
- ◆ Transfer of statutory clearances to new bidders: The Bill provides that the various approvals, licenses, and clearances given to the previous lessee will be extended to the new lessee for a period of 2 years for continuation of business.
- ◆ Prior approval from the central government: The Bill provides that prior approval of the central government will not be required by the state government in granting licenses for coal and lignite, in certain cases.

88. Uttarakhand CM - Trivendra Singh Rawat - has announced to make 'Gairsain' as the summer capital of the state.

- Dehradun is also Uttarakhand's Capital.
- Jammu and Kashmir also has two capitals - summer in Srinagar and winter at Jammu.

89. Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel has presented its state budget for 2020-21.

Schemes mentioned in the budget are:

A) Success of "Mukhyamantri Suposhan Abhiyan" has now been institutionalised into the scheme namely "Mukhyamantri Suposhan Yojana" with provision of Rs 60 crore.

B) Dr. Khubchand Baghel Swasthya Sahayta Yojana: It was launched to provide the health assurance coverage to 100% of population of Chhattisgarh & to make the process of availing services simple to the general public.

C) A new scheme - Rajiv Gandhi Nyay Yojana - will be launched to provide fair price of crops to farmers.

a. Benefit of the scheme will be available for 2019-20 as well. Provision of 5,100 crore has been made for the scheme.

D) Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme:

a. National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) started in 1995 at the national level. It has 4 components: -

- i. Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS),
- ii. Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS),
- iii. Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS),
- iv. National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) and Annapurna.

E) Rajiv Yuva Mittan Club Scheme: The Mittan clubs will be formed at the Gram Panchayat level and in urban bodies for leadership capacity, skill development among the youth in the state.

F) Jawahar Setu Yojana: It was launched for construction of bridges by the state.

a. Provision of Rs 240.50 crore for construction of new major bridge and Rs 151 crore under for construction of new medium bridge.

G) Mahtari Jatan Yojana: It was launched to provide nutritional support to pregnant women.

H) Mukhyamantri Vishesh Swasthya Sahayta Yojana: - Launched in 2019 to merge all the health benefit schemes including Dr. Khubchand Baghel Swasthya Sahayta Yojana under this one scheme.

I) Mukhyamantri Haat Bazar Clinic Yojana: Launched in 2018 to make health facilities available to the people through easily accessible clinics.



J) Mukhyamantri Shahri Slum Swasthya Yojana: Under the scheme, mobile medical teams go to urban slum and conduct medical examination.

K) Krishak Jeevan Jyoti Yojana (Chhattisgarh Sahaj Bijli Bill Yojana): Launched in 2018 to provide relief to farmers in electricity for agricultural pumps.

a. Provision of Rs. 2,300 crore for free power supply to agro-pumps upto 5 HP.

L) Mukhyamantri Ward Karyalay Yojana has been started to solve the basic problems of urban citizens at ward level with a provision of 5 crore.

M) Mukhyamantri Mittan Yojana is being started for the residents of 13 Municipal Corporation area. A provision of 10 crore has been made for this.

N) Mukhyamantri Khiladi Protsahan Yojana was also mentioned in the budget.

90. India has signed an agreement with USA for Rs 1,200 crore to procure the missile protection suites for two new Boeing-777 VVIP planes (expected to arrive by mid- 2021).

- 'Air Force One' will be the codename of these missile protection suites.
- Boeing-777 VVIP planes are being acquired for President and Prime Minister's domestic and international visits.

91. Central Government aims to replace all level crossings on National Highways with the Road Over/Under Bridges under the Setu Bharatam scheme.

- Purpose: - to decrease road fatalities on highways by 50% by the end of 2020 and ensure safe and smooth flow of traffic.
- Setu Bharatam scheme was launched in 2016 by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways for safe and seamless travel on National Highways.

Note: the scheme is covered in detail in ESI >> Govt scheme >> Ministry of Road Transport.

92. According to the Ministry of Home Affairs, Northeast states have witnessed 70% decline in insurgency incidents, 80% decline in civilian deaths and 78% reduction in security forces casualties in 2019 as compared to 2013.

- A total of 1,824 surrenders by insurgents were witnessed between 2014 and 2019.

93. Ministry of Home Affairs has approved the Automated Facial Recognition System (AFRS) set up by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) for identification of unrecognized bodies, missing children, persons and criminals by using police records.

- In 2019, India announced to launch the world's largest facial recognition system - AFRS.

94. 5th India Pharma 2020 and India Medical Device 2020 Conference and Exhibition will be held at Mahatma Mandir, Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

- Organizers - Department of Pharmaceuticals (under Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers) and FICCI.
- Theme of India Pharma: - Meeting Challenges of Affordable and Quality Healthcare
- Theme of India Medical Device: - Promoting Affordable responsible and Quality Medical Device for Universal Health Care.

Fun Facts:

- * Indian pharmaceutical market is the 3rd largest in terms of volume.
- * It is the 13th largest in terms of value.
- * India is the largest supplier of generic medicines globally.



* Indian medical devices industry is worth \$5.2 billion, which contributes about 4–5% of total Indian healthcare Industry (worth \$96.7 billion).

95. Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved an MoU between Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (India) and Ministry of Health and Public Hygiene (Republic of Cote d'Ivoire) for cooperation in the field of health.

- A working group will be established in the future to monitor the implementation of this MoU.
- The MoU ensures cooperation in 17 constituents of health including HIV/AIDS, Non-Communicable Diseases; Occupational and Environmental Health etc.

96. 4th Global Ayurveda Festival (largest Ayurveda event in the world) will be held in Kochi, Kerala in May 2020.

- Organizer: - Centre for Innovation in Science and Social Action (CISSA).
- Theme: - Ayurveda Medical Tourism: Actualizing India's credibility.

97. Maharashtra has renamed Aurangabad Airport as Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj Airport to honour Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj (son of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj).

- Mumbai airport is also known as Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Airport while Kolhapur airport was earlier renamed as Chhatrapati Rajaram Maharaj Airport.

98. MicroSave Consulting released the "The real story of women's financial inclusion in India" report which mentions that the gender gap in financial inclusion has been reduced by 14% during 2014-17.

- Number of bank accounts owned by women has also increased to 77% in 2017 from 43% in 2014 because of PM Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY).
- However, 42% of these accounts are still inactive.
- Under PMJDY scheme, 60% of 34 crore account holders are women, according to the govt.
- Bangladesh and Pakistan have just 36% and 7% share in women account ownership, respectively.
- MicroSave Consulting also organized the Women Financial Inclusion event in New Delhi in collaboration with NITI Aayog and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

99. Ministry of Jal Shakti has launched the Phase-II of Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) worth Rs 1.4 lakh crores (Rs 1,40,881 crore) for a period of FY21 to FY25 during a National Dissemination and Consultation workshop in New Delhi.

- Focus of SBM (G) Phase II - strengthen efforts made under Phase I to make India ODF free and strengthen solid and liquid waste management.

100. A study is done by the UNICEF and Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) on the impact of the SBM (G) on rural women. The study is named as - Impact of the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) on the convenience, safety and self-respect of women in rural India.

- Coverage: It surveyed 6,993 women across the 5 states of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, in February, 2020.
- Impacts:
 - It reveals that the increased access to household toilets has led to the improvement in the Suvidha, Suraksha and Swabhimaan of women in rural India.
 - 93% women feel safer from assault by not going out in the open to defecate
 - 91% women save up to one hour of their day, earlier spent on walking to defecation sites



➤ 88% of women are proud to own a toilet

101. Jammu and Kashmir has launched the Student Health Card scheme to improve the health of over 12 lakh students of government schools.

- As part of the scheme, periodic health check-ups of school going children will be held.
- The card will carry information about the immunisation record and other health records of the children.

102. Ghojadanga (West Bengal) and Agartala (Tripura) have been designated as the land immigration check posts under Passport (Entry into India) rules, 1950 to check all passengers entering and exiting from India.

- Both these are located in Indo-Bangladesh border.

103. Under the 'Agro Processing Cluster Scheme' of PM Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY), Ministry of Food Processing Industries has sanctioned 10 projects worth Rs 301.54 crores.

- Out of the total Rs 301.54 crores, ₹67.29 crore will be given as grant-in-aid under the 'Agro Processing Cluster Scheme' of the Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADA Yojana.
- Eight food processing projects worth ₹220 crore have been sanctioned for Tamil Nadu.

Some Steps taken to boost food processing industry in India: -

- * 100% FDI through automatic route in manufacturing of food products
- * 100% FDI under Government approval route for retail trading, including e-commerce.
- * 100% exemption of Income Tax on profit for new food processing units
- * 100% exemption of income tax from profit derived by FPOs having annual turnover of Rs 100 crore for activities such as post-harvest value addition to agriculture.

104. According to a report by Comptroller and Auditor General for the year ended 2018, Rajasthan has recorded the highest cases of environmental crimes at 40.59% in India during 2014-16.

- Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve, Sariska Tiger Reserve and Abhedha Biological Park (Kota) are located in Rajasthan.

105. India and European Union have collaborated to work on clean energy and climate by increasing renewable sources of energy during India's Smart Utility Week.

- This collaboration will be a part of Mission Innovation. This mission is an initiative of 24 countries and European Commission (on behalf of EU) to enhance the use of clean energy.
- India and Sweden will work together on Smart Grid Project, funded by Department of Science and Technology.
- Smart Grids are electricity networks that allow devices to communicate.

106. Ministry of AYUSH has released a digital platform - AYUSH GRID to digitize the entire AYUSH sector.

Additional Info. :-

Ministry of AYUSH has developed a portal named National AYUSH Morbidity and Standardized Terminologies Portal (NAMASTE) on the occasion of 2nd Ayurveda Day (17th October 2017) to provide Standardized Terminologies & Morbidity Codes for Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani systems of medicine.

107. 9th edition of national level search and rescue exercise 'SAREX-2020' has been conducted by Indian Coast Guard at Vasco, South Goa district.



- Theme: 'Harmonization of Maritime and Aeronautical Search and Rescue' (HAMSAR)
- For the first time, all 3 pillars of SAR mechanism i.e. Ministry of Shipping, Ministry of Civil Aviation and Ministry of Defence attended the exercise.

108. Centre has reconstructed the National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (NPDRR) and appointed Amit Shah as its chairman.

- NPDRR was established in 2013 to regulate the disaster management activities.

109. "Chapchar Kut" is the biggest and oldest (spring) festival of Mizoram. It is celebrated by performing traditional dances like 'Cheraw' etc.

- It is celebrated after Jhum farming (slash and burn method of cultivation).

110. Ministry of Women and Child Development and the World Bank have organized a discussion programme on the topic "The Future of Work: Women in India's Workforce" in New Delhi as part of the International Women's Day 2020.

- Smriti Irani has announced a diet plan for women and lactating mothers which is developed by Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR), for the 1st time.

111. Madhya Pradesh has approved to form a trust under the Chairmanship of CM Kamal Nath for constructing 'Ram Van Gaman Path' project.

- Purpose: - to retrace the route believed to have been taken by Lord Ram during his life in forest from Chitrakoot to Amarkantak.

112. Himachal Pradesh CM Jai Ram Thakur presented its budget for 2020-21, in which Rs 150 crore allocated for 'Nayi Rahein Nayi Manzilen' scheme.

- The scheme aims to beautify untapped areas of the state to promote tourism.
- 'Him startup Yojana' will be launched with the venture capital fund of Rs 10 crore for the welfare of startups in the state.

113. Maharashtra Deputy CM and finance minister Ajit Pawar has presented Rs 1.15 Lakh crore budget for 2020-21. Schemes highlighted in the budget are: -

- 'Shiv Bhojan' thali scheme - a subsidised food scheme for the poor - was allocated Rs 150 crore.
- The Chief Minister's Employment Generation Scheme was introduced for educated unemployed people. The govt will bear 75% stipend cost during their training period in new industries and will create 1 lakh new industrial units to generate employment.
- Chief Minister's Water Conservation Scheme was introduced for water and soil conservation at an outlay of Rs 2,000 crore.
- Rs 22,000 crore allocated for Mahatma Jyotirao Phule loan waiver scheme to waive loans up to Rs 2 lakh of farmers.
- One-time loan settlement scheme for farmers whose debt is more than Rs 2 lakh was also introduced.
- Budget proposed to deposit Rs 2 lakh in bank accounts of farmers whose dues were more than Rs 2 lakh till September 30, 2019.

114. Minister of Rural Development Narendra Singh Tomar has announced to create more than 14 lakh Self Help Groups to take their total to 75 lakhs by 2022.



- At present there are more than 60 lakh self-help groups (comprising 6.73 crore women) in the country.
115. Telangana has presented its budget for 2020-21.
- Rs 14,000 crore has been allocated for 'Rythu Bandhu' scheme to provide investment support to farmers.
 - Rs 11,758 crore allocated to Aasara pension scheme. Last year, age limit for eligibility of beneficiaries will be reduced in this scheme from 65 years to 57.
 - Telangana CM - K. Chandrashekar Rao
116. United Nations Global Compact Network India (UNGCNI) has organized the 3rd Gender Equality Summit 2020 on the theme of "India Inc. For Generation Equality: Decade of Action" in New Delhi.
- UNGCNI and Grant Thornton India have released a theme paper on "Rethinking Gender Representation across Value Chains".
117. During the 3rd Gender Equality Summit 2020, Best Practices Awards on Women at Workplace were presented: -
118. Govt has set up the 12 member panel, chaired by Injeti Srinivas (Corporate Affairs Secretary), to prepare an investigation manual for the Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO).
- Chairman of SFIO - Amardeep Singh Bhatia
119. Kerala will launch "I am also digital" digital literacy drive in the Thiruvananthapuram Corporation to create awareness about e-governance and digital platforms.
120. President of India has launched initiatives for gender advancement and equality in academic and research institutions on the National Science Day (28th February, 2020) celebrations.
- Organizers - Kerala State IT mission and Kerala Literacy Mission.
 - Vigyan Jyoti Scheme: launched by the Department of Science & Technology (DST) to encourage girls in high school to pursue Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) in their higher education.
 - TIFAC under Ministry of Science and Technology launches Vigyan Jyoti
 - The program taps 100 girl students in 550 districts from 2020-2025.
 - GATI Scheme: The Gender Advancement for Transforming Institutions (GATI) will develop Gender Equality in STEM.
121. National Conference on Women in Police and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) has been organized in New Delhi.
- Organizer: Bureau of Police Research and Development.
 - Themes of the Conference: 'Cyber Stalking and Bullying of Women: Steps for Protection' and 'Challenges faced by CAPF Women in Operational Areas'.
 - Minister of Women and Child Development, Smriti Irani, has released a book titled "To Greater Heights" (authored by Nitu - DIG and CRPF) and a hand-out 'BPR & D Mirror- Gender Bender'.
122. Ministry for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, in partnership with State Skill Development Missions, has launched Mahatma Gandhi National Fellowship programme (MGNF) in IIM-Bengaluru to boost skill development for development of districts.



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- It is a part of Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP) programme.
123. Minister of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Prakash Javadekar, has mandated that sanitary pad manufacturers will have to supply biodegradable bag for disposal of each pad from January 2021.
- SWaCH Pune (Solid Waste Collection and Handling) interacted with Javadekar.
 - Waste pickers will be called as 'Swachhta Sevakas'.
 - SWaCH is India's first wholly-owned cooperative of self-employed waste collectors.
124. Odisha has become the first state in India to constitute a separate department for Self-Help Groups named as "Department of Mission Shakti" for the development of women.
- Odisha launched the 'Mamata Scheme' in 2011 under which Rs 5000 is paid to pregnant and lactating women in rural areas every year.
125. Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has informed Parliament that Gujarat has topped in the solar rooftop plants at 50,915 followed by Maharashtra.
- Gujarat has adopted "Surya Gujarat" scheme to increase the use of solar energy in the state by covering more than 8 lakh domestic consumers by 2022.
126. Parliamentary Standing Committee on Human Resource Development (HRD) has conducted the "Demands for Grants 2020-21 Analysis" which mentions that only 56% of government schools in India have electricity with lowest rates in the states of Manipur and Madhya Pradesh.
- In these two states, less than 20% of the schools have electricity.
 - Less than 57% of public schools have a playground.
 - Only 30% of schools in Odisha and Jammu and Kashmir have a playground.
 - School Budget has been cut by 27%.
 - Dropout rate has increased at secondary level (class 9-10) at 17% as compared to elementary school (class 1-8) at 4% and upper secondary school (class 11-12) at 2%.
127. Andhra Pradesh has launched the NIGHA application to curb election malpractices such as the use of money and alcohol in the upcoming elections of local body.
- The app was developed by Department of Panchayat Raj.
128. 1st phase of Jewar Airport in Uttar Pradesh has been included in the World's 100 Strategic Global Infrastructure Projects of 2020 by CG/LA Infrastructure.
- UP (India) and Yugoslavia (Europe) have been chosen in the category of aviation.
 - 13th Global Infrastructure Leadership Forum will be held in New York on March 25 to 27, 2020.
129. "Fagli" traditional festival is celebrated in Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh to denote the end of the winter and the start of the Spring.
130. Central government has set up a Delimitation Commission, headed by Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai, for carrying out the delimitation process of Jammu and Kashmir UT, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Nagaland.
- The commission has been set up under the section 3 of the Delimitation Act, 2002.



- The commission will have Chief Election Commissioner (Sushil Chandra) and the State Election Commissioners.
- Delimitation will be done on the basis of Census 2001.
- Under the Section 60 of the J&K Reorganisation Act, 2019, the Legislative Assembly seats will be increased to 114 from 107.

131. Ministry of Home Affairs has formed two special committees to deal with issues and approvals related to the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF).

- First committee: To be headed by the home secretary - Ajay Kumar Bhalla - to deal with issues decided between the Ministry of Home Affairs and these forces.
- Second committee: Headed by N N Sinha - Secretary (Border Management), and will solve only the procurement matters.
- Assam Rifles is not a part of CAPF, yet issues related to it will also be dealt by these two committees.

132. Department of Science and Technology (DST) has given Rs 7.25 crore to IIT-Mandi under its National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS) for establishing a Technology Innovation Hub (TIH) on its campus.

- Purpose: - It will focus on human resource and skill development, entrepreneurship and collaboration with other leading institutions.

133. International Yoga Day events on June 21 will be organized in Leh (capital of Ladakh).

134. Rajya Sabha has approved minor changes in the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order Amendment Bill, 2019 which seeks to include Parivara and Talawara tribal communities of Karnataka in ST category.

- Changes: to declare this bill as the 71st amendment bill instead of 70th and replace figure "2019" to "2020" at line one in first page.

135. A Parliamentary Committee on Petroleum has presented some of its observations on the performance of the PM Ujjwala Yojana (launched in 2016 by Ministry of Petroleum) - which has been closed.

- The scheme has achieved its target of 8 crore LPG connections in September 2019.
- However, only 3 states (Haryana, Punjab and Andhra Pradesh) and 6 UTs (Delhi, Chandigarh, Daman & Diu, Dadar & Nagar Haveli, Andaman & Nicobar Island and Puducherry) have become kerosene free.
- The committee observed that large segments of people in various states are still dependent on kerosene for cooking and household lighting.

Note: - The scheme is covered in ESI >> Govt scheme >> Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

136. Department of Posts has, for the first time in India, introduced a free digital parcel locker service in the Kolkata - at Nabadiganta IT Post Office in Salt Lake City and New Town.

- Purpose: it will enable customers to collect their parcels from the digital locker within 7 days after the delivery of the parcel at the post office.

137. World's first Digital Solutions Exchange in the cloud - GOKADDAL - has been launched in India.



- It is the first of its kind solutions aggregator, marketplace and cloud delivery platform with focus on four A's: Automation, Artificial Intelligence, Analytics and Augmentative Technologies.
- GOKADDAL is a cloud-based, solutions exchange platform to help technology solution seekers find solution on this platform.
- GOKADDAL Technologies is a Dubai based emerging technology company (led by Ravinder Pal Singh), a part of Merkado group.

138. Maharashtra govt will implement the "happy hour" for autorickshaws on the recommendation of Khatua panel.

- The panel recommended to reduce the autorickshaws' fare prices by 15% between 12 pm and 4 pm to turn the lean hours into happy hours for housewives, elder and other citizens who travel during this time.
- Khatua panel, headed by BC Khatua, was formed by Maharashtra govt to review the fares recommended by the single-member Hakim panel in 2012.

139. Government has formed a committee to work out modalities of Kisan Rail under the aegis of Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare which will have representatives from Agriculture and Railway ministries.

- Kisan Rail will be set up through the public-private-partnership (PPP) mode for a cold supply chain to transport perishable goods.
- Container Corporation of India Ltd (CONCOR) has already set up temperature- controlled perishable cargo centres at Ghazipur Ghat (UP), New Azadpur (Delhi) and Raja ka Talab (UP) as a pilot project under the Kisan Vision Project through a CSR initiative.

140. 'Hola Mohalla' - a Sikh festival is observed in Punjab after Holi festival to showcase the martial art skills of Punjabi community.

141. National Handicapped Finance Development Corporation (NHFDC) has organized the "EKAM Festival" (Entrepreneurship, Knowledge, Awareness, Marketing) in Delhi.

- NHFDC operates under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- 3 new initiatives were launched during EKAM: -

142. Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) is planning to set up logistics bases in Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia and Sri Lanka to persuade these countries to buy India's light combat aircraft Tejas and military helicopters.

- HAL has identified South East Asia, West Asia and North Africa to sell key platforms like Tejas, attack helicopter Rudra and advanced light helicopter Dhruv.
- Tejas has been developed by Aeronautical Development Agency and the HAL.

143. Bhawna Dehariya (Indian mountaineer from Madhya Pradesh) has climbed Mount Kosciuszko - the highest mountain peak in Australia.

144. Indo-U.S. Fellowship for Women in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics & Medicine (WISTEMM), under Department of Science and Technology (DST) in association with Indo-U.S. Science & Technology Forum (IUSSTF), provides international exposure to several women scientists.



145. Telangana Government has opened a monitoring cell under Mission Bhagiratha to address the water scarcity in summers.

- Launched in 2016 by the Telangana Govt, Mission Bhagiratha aims to provide safe drinking water to every household in the state from Godavari and Krishna rivers.

146. Karnataka CM and also Finance Minister BS Yediyurappa has presented the State Budget for 2020-21.

- For the first time, state government has come up with a child budget in which all policies & programmes for children below 18 years are consolidated, amounting to (Rs. 36340 crore) Rs 15.28% of the total volume of the budget.

Schemes highlighted in the budget: -

A) Karnataka's Bhagya Lakshmi Scheme was launched during 2006-07 to promote the birth of girl child in BPL families and to raise the status of the girl child in the family in particular and society in general.

B) Karnataka bicycle scheme for supplying free cycles to students began in 2006-07 to facilitate travelling from home to schools and vice-versa. Both the schemes will be continued.

C) Rs 500 crore has been allocated for Kalasa-Banduri (or Bandura) drinking water project in Karnataka, which proposes to divert water Mahadayi river (also known as Mandovi) from Kalasa and Banduri canals into the Malaprabha river in Karnataka.

➤ Aim: to facilitate drinking water to 13 towns in the northern Karnataka (2nd most arid regions in India after Rajasthan).

D) "Mukhya Mantri Nava Nagarothana" scheme for developing of Bengaluru city.

E) "Shubhra Bengaluru" scheme - for Solid Waste Management of Bengaluru and developing lakes of Bengaluru.

147. Mumbai Central railway station (Western Railway) will be renamed as the Nana Shankarseth Mumbai Central railway station.

- Jagannath (Nana) Shankarseth was a 19th century Maharashtrian philanthropist and educationist who contributed a lot to the development of Mumbai.
- Maharashtra CM - Uddhav Thackeray

148. WION (World Is One News) global summit was held in Dubai, UAE.

- Theme: "Navigating and negotiating global imperatives".
- During the event, Sir Creek pact between India and Pakistan was highlighted.

Sir Creek pact: -

- Sir Creek - named after a British representative - is a 96-km strip of water which is disputed between India and Pakistan.
- The strip divides Sindh Province of Pakistan from the Rann of Kutch of Gujarat. Pakistan claims its rights on the strip, citing the Bombay Government Resolution of 1914 signed between Sindh govt and Rao Maharaj of Kutch.

149. The central govt is planning to set up a National Interlinking of Rivers Authority (NIRA) to execute interlinking projects at inter and intra state levels.

- Special Committee on Interlinking of Rivers, headed by Minister of Jal Shakti - Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, had in its last meeting discussed about setting up NIRA.
- Once NIRA is approved, the projects will be pursued as National Projects wherein 90% of the cost will be borne by the centre and rest by the state.

- Currently, six projects are being considered:-

150. Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has mentioned that 'Bhoomi Rashi' portal (launched in 2018) has smoothened the process of land acquisition for the purpose of National Highway projects.

- The portal was developed to fully digitize the entire process of land acquisition.
- The portal is linked with Public Financial Management System (PFMS) for depositing the compensation in the account of interested/affected persons immediately.

151. Government mentioned that Rs 1.83 lakh crore has been spent under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, (MNREGA) during 2017-2020.

- Till Now, 526.97 lakh families have been provided employment out of 603.81 lakh families.
- During 2011-14, Rs 92,483 crore was spent for MNREGA.

MNREGA was implemented in 2005 by Ministry of Rural Development to provide a 100 days employment guarantee to rural households.

152. WINGS INDIA 2020 - International Exhibition & Conference on Civil Aviation - was held in Hyderabad on the theme of 'Flying For All'.

- Organizers: - Ministry of Civil Aviation, Airports Authority of India and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).
- Spice Jet signed a tripartite MoU with GMR Hyderabad International Airport Limited (GHIAL) and Ras-Al-Khaimah International Airport (UAE) to assist farmers in transporting agricultural produce from India to UAE.
- The MoU is in line with the Krishi Udaan scheme of Ministry of Civil Aviation.
- Another tripartite MoU was signed between GHIAL, Airbus and the Telangana government to explore IoT sensor-based monitoring of environment at Rajiv Gandhi International Airport as part of sustainable aviation in Hyderabad.

153. Assam govt has provided Rs 300 crores for constructing 33 stadiums across the state under the Uttaran Scheme.

- State Government adopted 'Uttaran Scheme' to implement innovative projects suitable to local needs of the districts in the state.

154. Central Reserve Police Force has signed an MoU with Aditya Mehta Foundation to train its 189 disabled CRPF personnel in the areas of cybersecurity, artificial intelligence and paralympic sports.

- CRPF's Director General - AP Maheshwari

155. Kerala has ordered poultry culling to control the Bird Flu in Parappanangadi.

- Poultry Culling is the reduction of an animal population by selective slaughter.

India is the 17th largest poultry producer in the world in 2019. Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka are the major Poultry producing states in the country.

156. Central government has notified the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Rules, 2020 to implement the recent amendments to the POCSO Act with stricter punishment for child abuse.

- Under the rules, all state governments have been asked to form a child protection policy based on the principle of "zero-tolerance" to violence against children.



- Under the new rules, any institution coming in regular contact with children must ensure a police verification and background check on periodic basis of every staff.
- Any person who has get any pornographic material involving a child should report the contents to the special juvenile police unit (SJPU) or cyber-police.

POCSO Act was enacted in 2012.

POCSO (Amendment) Act, 2019 was also approved in August last year.

157. The committee chaired by Bibek Debroy had recommended Concessioning of commercial operation of train service like Rajdhani/Shatabdi to private parties.

- In 2019, a group of secretaries has been constituted, under Amitabh Kant - CEO of Niti Aayog, to advise on allowing private passenger train operators to operate trains with world class technology through PPP model with govt.
- For the first time in India, New Delhi Railway Station will be converted into a world- class railway station at an estimated cost of Rs 6,500 crore by the Rail Land Development Authority.

158. Central govt has sanctioned Rs 365 crore for setting the 2nd Integrated Check Post (ICP) in Tripura at Sabroom district (Also, Sabroom is the 1st Special Economic Zone of Tripura).

- 1st Integrated Check Post was set up in Akhaura district (Tripura) along the Indo- Bangla border in 2013.
- Purpose: - to facilitate ease of travelling and transfer of goods between India and Bangladesh.

159. First regional edition of "Divya Kala Shakti" event (Witnessing the Abilities in Disabilities) was held in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

- Organisers - National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities (NIEPMD), Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) under Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- Purpose: to enable PwD to exhibit their talents.

160. National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) has launched the Cri-MAC and NCTC on its 35th Inception Day on March 12.

- Crime Multi Agency Centre (Cri-MAC) was launched for sharing of information on heinous crime for inter-state coordination and National Cybercrime Training Centre (NCTC) was launched for providing eLearning services to various stakeholders on cyber-crime investigation on large scale.
- National Fingerprint Identification System (NAFIS) is being setup by NCRB to help police.
- NCRB has also organized the CCTNS Hackathon & Cyber Challenge 2020, in collaboration with Cyber Peace Foundation.
- Reports - 'Crime in India', 'Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India', 'Prison Statistics India' and 'Finger Print in India' are some reports released by NCRB.

161. Minister of MSME - Nitin Gadkari - has urged members of parliament to spread information about "Udyam Sakhi" Portal for raising awareness about government schemes and to facilitate the networking of women start-ups.

- Ministry of MSME had launched the Udyam Sakhi portal in 2018 for promoting women entrepreneurship in India.



162. Scientists at Agharkar Research Institute (under the Department of Science & Technology), Pune have enriched, isolated, and cultivated the 45 different strains of methanotrophs and created the first indigenous methanotroph culture.

- Purpose: to reduce methane emissions in agriculture.
- Methanotroph are the prokaryotes that oxidize methane through anaerobic metabolism.

163. Minister of State for Power, New and Renewable Energy - Raj Kumar Singh – has launched a new website of Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.

- Two additional portals - 'AkshayUrja Portal' & 'India Renewable Idea Exchange' (IRIX) have been launched in the website.

164. Ministry of Shipping has inaugurated ROPAX services - a water transport service project from Bhaucha Dhakka in Mumbai to Mandwa under Eastern Waterfront Development - at Alibag, Maharashtra.

- ROPAX aims to reduce the time taken in travelling between these locations.
- ROPAX Vessel M2M -1 was built in Greece.

165. Ministry of Jal Shakti has informed the Parliament that groundwater in India is contaminated with Uranium at 30 micro-grams per litre, according to the WHO's report.

- As per WHO, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Jharkhand, Odisha, Rajasthan, Punjab, Telangana, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Jammu Kashmir have presence of Uranium in ground water.
- Bureau of Indian Standards has permitted a maximum of 0.03 mg per litre of Uranium in drinking water (as per WHO's guidelines).

166. Union Cabinet has directed to remove the obscurity in the Modified New Pricing Scheme-III (launched in 2014) to determine the costs of urea units.

- Due to the ambiguous language, the scheme could not be implemented. However, the govt has now facilitated smooth implementation of the scheme with an additional grant of Rs 350 per metric tonne to 30 urea manufacturing units.
- Also, a special compensation of 150 per MT will be granted to urea units which are more than 30 years old and converted urea to gas.

Modified NPS scheme-III provides incentives to the domestic urea manufacturers, encouraged investment in urea production sector to reduce imports of urea.

167. A Supreme Court bench, headed by Justice DY Chandrachud, has ruled out that women officers entered through Short Service Commission would be given a permanent commission in the Indian Navy.

168. Haryana Government has announced to rename the Amin village in Kurukshetra district as Abhimanyupur.

169. India has pledged Nepalese Rs 107 million for the construction of 3 schools in Nepal under the India-Nepal Development Partnership programme.

- Two MoU with Municipalities of Darchula and Dhanusha districts (Nepal) were signed by Indian govt for the same.
- Two school buildings will be utilised by Shree Malikarjun Higher Secondary School in Darchula and Baidyanath Devnarayan Public Higher Secondary School in Dhanusha.

170. Jharkhand has become the 3rd state in India (after Maharashtra and Odisha) to launch the star-rating program for industries based on their pollutant emissions.

- Jharkhand State Pollution Control Board (JSPCB) in association with the University of Chicago has launched this system.

171. Central government has included Konark Sun Temple (Odisha) and Statue of Unity (Gujarat) in the Iconic Tourist Sites list, increasing the total number of iconic tourist sites places from 17 to 19.

- Konark temple is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

172. Minister of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises - Prakash Javadekar - has informed Rajya Sabha that the ministry has set a target of selling around 70 lakh hybrid and electric vehicles by 2020 end.

- Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles (FAME) scheme was launched in 2015 to boost indigenous manufacturing of e-vehicles in India.

173. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh informed the Rajya Sabha that indigenous manufacturing of defence goods is increasing.

- The share of Indian companies getting defence contracts from Ministry of Defence increased from 39.06% in 2015-16 to 75.03% in 2019-20.

174. Department of Space has informed the Lok Sabha that ISRO has designed NavIC messaging system and receiver which is used by the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information System (INCOIS) to broadcast emergency warning messages like cyclone, tsunami and high waves.

- Apart from these, INCOIS broadcasts the information of Potential Fishing Zone (PFZ).
- Besides, ISRO has distributed NavIC system to various states for the benefit of fishermen community.

175. Government has approved the 2nd phase of Swachh Bharat Mission under which gram panchayats are required to use half of the fund allocated to them by the 15th Finance Commission on sanitation and water activities.

- Every gram panchayat currently receives Rs 7-20 lakh — depending on the number of households — under a development fund set up by the government.
- An additional Rs 5 lakh is allocated to each gram panchayat for solid and liquid waste management under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

Note:- 2nd phase of Swachh Bharat Mission has been mentioned in February Spotlight.

176. Minister of New and Renewable Energy, R K Singh, informed Rajya Sabha that India's rooftop solar energy capacity is 1,922 megawatt (MW) at present.

- So far, over Rs 1,874 crore has been released as central financial assistance towards installation of capacities in the sector.
- Under Phase II of the Grid Connected Roof Solar Project, the government provides CFA of 20% of the cost to group housing societies/resident welfare associations.

Grid-Connected Rooftop Solar Photovoltaic Project:

◆◆◆ India implemented this project in 2016 with World Bank's assistance at a cost of \$625 million.

◆◆◆ It aims to install 400 MW of solar rooftop.

◆◆◆ The Project is being implemented by the State Bank of India.



- ◆◆◆ The project is estimated to close by November 2021.
- ◆◆◆ India's has a target to achieve 40 GW solar rooftop energy by 2022.

177. Agricultural and Processed food product Export Development Authority (APEDA) has signed an MoU with Small Farmers Agriculture-Business Consortium (SFAC) to link the Farmer Producer Organizations and farmer cooperatives with the export value chain.

- APEDA and SFAC will also establish an Agri-Business Promotion unit in the North-East and to mentor FPO in Northeast.

178. National Botanical Research Institute- Lucknow has developed a pest resistant cotton variety to protect the cotton crops from whiteflies (one of the most devastating crop- pest).

- The cotton variety will be tested at the Center of Punjab Agriculture University, Faridkot, Ludhiana.
- BT Cotton is also a genetically modified cotton which is resistant to only two pests (excluding whiteflies).

179. Defence Acquisition Council has approved to procure of 83 Light Combat Aircraft - Tejas MK-1A for Indian Air Force.

- LCA Tejas are developed by Aeronautical Development Agency (agency under DRDO) and manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).

180. Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers has informed Parliament that the Drugs Prices Control Order, 2013 (DPCO) has saved Rs 12,447 crores per annum.

181. For the first time, Supreme Court has removed a minister from state cabinet. Manipur Minister T.H. Shyamkumar has been removed on the grounds of disqualification of the minister.

- Article 212 prohibits all courts including Supreme Court to not interfere in the proceedings of the Legislature of state.
- Article 142 allows SC to pass an order to do "complete justice" to matter pending before it. In this case, the disqualification plea was pending before the speaker of the assembly (Y. Khemchand) since 2017.

182. Ministry of Power has informed Parliament that India is the 3rd largest producer of electricity in the world in 2019, as per International Energy Agency's ranking.

- Also, India is ranked 106th in terms of per capital consumption of electricity in 2017.
- India has become a power surplus country. As of December 2019, the National Electric Grid had an installed capacity of 368.79 GW.
- As of May 2019, 72% of India's electricity was generated from coal-based power plants.

183. India has signed an agreement with Israeli Weapon Industries for procuring 16,479 Light Machine Guns (aka Negev) for Rs 880 crores.

184. Lok Sabha has passed the Aircraft (Amendment) bill, 2020 to amend the Aircraft Act, 1934.

185. Government has set up an Economic Response Task Force, headed by Nirmala Sitharaman (Finance Minister), to focus on impact of Covid-19 on lower class, middle class and the BPL people.

186. Ministry Jal Shakti has informed Lok Sabha under the National Aquifer Mapping Programme plans for mapping 11.8 lakh square km area have been developed out of 25 lakh square km of mappable area.

- Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) is implementing the mapping programme to know about the available ground water in the country.

187. Dayananda Sagar University in association with Atal Innovation Mission and NITI Aayog has established the Atal Incubation Centre-Dayananda Sagar University (AIC- DSU) Foundation in Bengaluru.

- Purpose: To promote the culture of innovation and entrepreneurial spirit among students and researchers.

188. Jammu & Kashmir UT has approved the J&K Health Scheme to provide health insurance of Rs 5 lakh by merging with the Ayushman Bharat- Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY).

- The scheme will benefit nearly 1.25 crore residents of the UT.
- The govt employees will continue to get Rs 300 per month as medical allowances for OPD treatment.

189. Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs has mentioned that Rs 6.16 lakh crore investment has been approved under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) so far. [the scheme is covered in ESI » Govt schemes]

190. Ministry of Railways is planning to electrify all broad gauge routes in India by December 2023.

- Indian Railways plan to have approx. 1000 MW of solar power and 200 MW of wind power in this project.
- Out of this power demand, about 204.82 MW (101.42 MW solar and 103.4MW wind power) is already set up on the network.

191. Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) has approved to procure defence equipment consisting of Aerial Fuses and Twin-Dome Simulators for Hawk Mk32 aircraft for Indian Aircraft Force for Rs 1,300 crore.

192. Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) has launched the "Tech for Tribal" initiative to provide entrepreneurship skills to the tribal people.

- Partners in this initiative: - IIT-Kanpur, IIT-Roorkee, IIM-Indore, Kalinga Institute of Social Science- Bhubaneswar, and SRIJAN, Jaipur. These institutes will develop course contents related to entrepreneurship.

- The initiative will be linked with Van Dhan Vikas Kendra (VDVK) in later stages.

Note: - Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana is covered in ESI » Govt schemes » Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

193. Lok Sabha has passed a bill to accord the status of institution of national importance to Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda (based in Jamnagar, Gujarat).

- It will be done by merging the group of Ayurveda institutes at the Gujarat Ayurveda University campus in Jamnagar.



194. Meghalaya has allocated Rs 724 crore for healthcare sector which also includes Rs 2.5 crore for Meghalaya's Outcome Oriented Transformation in Health, Education and Rural Development (MOTHER) programme in its budget 2020-21.

- Promotion of Innovative and Market-Driven Enterprises (PRIME) programme of Meghalaya has got Rs 10 crore allocation.

195. Himachal Pradesh CM Jairam Thakur has launched the Police Station Visitor Survey System and e-Night Beat Checking System.

- Police Station Visitor Survey System will help in keeping the records of the visitors in police stations.
- e-Night Beat Checking System will help the state police department to track the suspected vehicles and criminals who move in the night.

196. Jammu and Kashmir has set up the "J&K Socially and Educationally Backward Classes Commission", headed by Justice (retired) G D Sharma, for backward class people in the Union Territory under the Department of Social Welfare.

- The commission will also examine the Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Castes Order, 1956 and the Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order, 1989.
- Also, J&K Handicraft Corporation and J&K Handloom Development Corporation will be merged and become J&K Handloom and Handicrafts Marketing Corporation (JKHHMC) for effectiveness.

197. Administrative council (headed by Lt Governor G C Murmu) of Jammu & Kashmir has implemented the Dairy cooperative scheme for dairy co-op society.

- National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) will support and sponsor the scheme.
- Purpose: - to increase the milk production in J&K and create infrastructure for milk processing.
- Fund: - The government will provide 50% of the loan; 20% of the share capital; 25% subsidy and the owners contribution will be 5%.
- Committee: - A monitoring committee, headed by the Registrar Cooperative Societies of J&K, is also established for smooth implementation of the scheme.
- Other provisions: - establishment of integrated dairy programs with the provision for technical inputs for farmer's organizations, mobile veterinary care and artificial insemination.

198. Parliamentary Standing Committee on Chemicals and Fertilizers, headed by Kanimozhi Karunanidhi, has submitted its report on whether genuine farmers are getting fertilizer subsidy or not.

- As per the report, 1182.04 lakh metric tonnes of fertilizers have been sold under Direct Benefit Transfer Scheme until December 2019.

199. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has proposed a new "Draft Defence Procurement Procedure" (DPP) 2020 for replacing DPP 2016.

- It will be implemented from 1st April 2020 to March 31, 2025.
- A high-level committee, headed by Apurva Chandra, set up by Ministry of Defence 2019 has finalized the draft of DPP, 2020.

Some of the Important New Features:

- ◆ 'Leasing': - The new rules have allowed to acquire defence equipment on lease.
- ◆ Buy (Global - Manufacture in India) category introduced - Foreign products that have a minimum of 50% indigenous content will come under this new category.



◆ Buy (Indian-IDDM) category - Under this category, only Indian products --designed in-house, developed and manufactured with a minimum of 50% indigenous content of the total contract value -- of an Indian vendor would be classified.

200. Union Cabinet has approved the Modified Electronics Manufacturing Clusters Scheme 2.0 to enhance the growth of Electronics System Design and Manufacturing sector.

- Purpose: developing entrepreneurship, increase employment opportunities, attract investment in this sector.
- The scheme will run for 8 years at a total outlay of more than Rs 3,000 crores (Rs.3,762.25 crore).

201. Borders Road Organization has constructed a 360 feet long bridge across Teesta river in North Sikkim under Project Swastik.

- Teesta river flows through the states of West Bengal and Sikkim and then flows to Bangladesh into Bay of Bengal.
- India and Bangladesh signed the Teesta river sharing agreement in 1983.

202. Union Cabinet has approved the Production Incentive Scheme for large scale manufacturing of Electronics to increase investments in mobile manufacturing.

- Electronics market in India has increased from \$11 billion in 2015-16 to \$20.8 billion in 2018-19.
- The domestic production of electronic components is around \$10 billion, out of which \$7.7 billion is consumed domestically.

203. Union Cabinet has approved the Medical Device Park Scheme for the next 5 years to increase the production of medical devices.

- Medical device parks will be set up in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh at a cost of Rs 100 crores for each park.

Fun Fact:

India is the 4th largest market for medical devices in Asia.

204. Union Cabinet has approved to set up 12,500 Ayush Health and Wellness Centre under Ayushman Bharat Mission at a cost of Rs 3,395 crores.

- The centres are to be constructed within a time span of 5 years.
- In 2018, the govt had announced to set up 1.5 lakh Health and Wellness Centres under Ayushman Bharat in order to create a holistic wellness model based on AYUSH principles.
- Union Cabinet has approved the inclusion of AYUSH Health and Wellness Centre - component of Ayushman Bharat in the National AYUSH Mission (NAM).

205. Gujarat Police has become the first state police in India to use Taser guns.

206. Union Cabinet has approved the Promotion of Bulk Drug Parks scheme for financing common infrastructure facilities in 3 Bulk Drug Parks at a cost of Rs. 3,000 crore for next the 5 years.

- Centre will give Grants-in-Aid to states with a maximum limit of Rs 1,000 crore per park.
- Purpose: - to reduce imports and manufacturing cost of bulk drugs.

207. India has approved further progress in implementing the Fleet Vessel Ship (FVS) Agreement worth \$2.3 billion with Turkey (which was put on hold in Oct 2019).



- As part of the agreement, Turkey company TAIS would manufacture FVS at Hindustan Shipyard Ltd's premise in Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.
- In 2016, the approval was given to procure 45,000 tonne FSV for Indian Navy.

208. Union Cabinet has also approved the production linked incentive (PLI) scheme for promoting domestic manufacturing of critical Drug Intermediates and APIs at a cost of Rs 6,940 crore for next 8 years.

- Financial incentive will be given to eligible manufacturers of identified 53 critical bulk drugs for a period of 6 years.

209. Union Cabinet has approved the Scheme for Promotion of manufacturing of Electronic Components and Semiconductors (SPECS) to promote the supply chain of an electronic product.

- Under the scheme, a financial incentive of 25% of capital expenditure for the manufacturing of goods that constitute the supply chain of an electronic product will be given.
- Total cost of the scheme is approx. Rs.3,285 crore.

210. Netherlands' Flying car-maker PAL-V has signed an MoU with Gujarat govt to set up a manufacturing plant in Gujarat.

- For the first time in India, the Dutch car company has set up the firm and will commence the production by 2021.

211. Ministry of Defence has informed the Parliament that it has acquired land in the Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu defence corridors to scale up the defence manufacturing.

- In 2019, government has set up defence industrial corridors in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu to increase defence equipment production in India.
- FDI policy was also revised to allow 100% FDI in the defence sector through Government route. 49% FDI is allowed in defence through automatic route.

212. For the first time in India, IIT-Madras will host the Global Hyperloop pod competition.

- India's first Hyperloop Pod was being developed in Maharashtra between Pune and Mumbai.
- Another project of Hyperloop pod transport was started between Vijayawada (Andhra Pradesh) and Amaravati (Andhra Pradesh).
- International Hyperloop Pod Contest is conducted by SpaceX.

213. Govt plans to install 3 super computers at IIT-Kanpur, IIT-Hyderabad and JN Centre for Advanced Scientific Research-Bengaluru by April 2020 under the National Super Computer Mission (launched in 2015).

- Govt aims to install 11 new systems in NITs, IITs and IISERs by December 2020.
- India already has 5 super computers.

Extra Facts:

- USA super computer called Summit in the Ridge National Laboratory is the world's top super computer.
- National Super Computer Mission is jointly steered by Ministry of Electronics and IT and Department of Science and Technology and implemented by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Pune and IISc-Bengaluru.

214. Tamil has formed its 38th Mayiladuthurai district from Nagapattinam.

215. Union Cabinet has approved an MoU signed between Ministry of Railways (India) and DB Engineering & Consulting GMBH of Germany for technological cooperation in Railway Sector.

- The MoU was signed in February, 2020.

216. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Deputy Executive Secretary Joyce Msuya has praised India (Environment Secretary C K Mishra) for efficiently leading the COP 13 of Conservation of Migratory Species.

- India was also praised for its efforts in phasing -out of single-use plastics. The target year for phasing out single use plastic is 2022.
- India was also praised for its engagement in the Clean Seas Campaign.

217. Agharkar Research Institute- Pune (under DST) has developed a new variety biofortified high quality wheat known as MACS 4028.

- Nutritional quality: - high protein content of about 14.7%, zinc 40.3 ppm, and iron content of 40.3 ppm and 46.1 ppm respectively, good milling quality.
- MACS is the semi-dwarf wheat and matures in 102 days with a high yielding capacity of 19.3 quintals per hectare.
- UNICEF funded the MACS 4028 to make India - "Kuposhan Mukh Bharat" by 2022.
- The discovery of MACS 4028 was published in the Indian Journal of Genetics and Plant Breeding.

218. Indian Railway Stations Development Corporation Limited (IRSDC), in partnership with Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation, has started to develop the first-ever "Form Based Codes" for the development of railway land.

- Purpose: to develop pedestrian-friendly, market responsive and sustainable railway stations and its surrounding areas.
- Habibganj in Madhya Pradesh and Gandhinagar in Gujarat are the first two railway stations that are being developed into world-class transit hubs among other stations.

219. Ministry of Finance announced Economic Package worth 1.7 lakh crore to provide relief from Covid-19.

- For small companies with 100 employees or less, of whom 90% earn less than Rs.15,000 a month, the Centre will bear the cost of both employer and employee contribution (a total of 24%) to the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) for the next 3 months to benefit 80 lakh employees, and incentivise 4 lakh establishments.
- Collateral free loans provided for women self-help groups under the National Rural Livelihood Mission are being doubled to Rs.20 lakhs.

220. Odisha has launched the "Mo Jeeban (My Life) Programme" to encourage people to take a pledge to stay indoors due to Coronavirus outbreak.

221. National Book Trust (Delhi), under Ministry of Human Resources and Development, has launched the "Stay Home India with Books" initiative wherein more than 100 books will be provided on the website of NBT.

222. Maharashtra has donated the highest number of organs for the benefit of around 449 patients followed by Tamil Nadu and Telangana.

- Regional Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation- State Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (ROTTO-SOTTO) along with four Zonal Transplant Coordination Centre (ZTCC) of Mumbai, Pune, Nagpur, and Aurangabad in Maharashtra were the top performers.

- On 10th Indian Organ Donation Day on 30th November, the National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation presented the best state award to Maharashtra in November last year.

223. Union Cabinet has approved to continue the Rebate of State and Central Taxes and Levies (RoSCTL) w.e.f., April 1 until the scheme is merged with newly approved Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP) for textile sector.

- RoDTEP replaces the Merchandise Export from India Scheme-2015 (MEIS).

224. Indian Army has launched the "Operation Namaste" to reduce the spread of Coronavirus in the country.

225. Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has signed an agreement with India for three mega rail infrastructure projects worth Rs 15,295 crores.

- The three projects are Dedicated Freight Corridors between Delhi and Mumbai (to tackle freight transport demand), Mumbai-Trans Harbour link project and Mumbai Metro Line-3 Project.

226. In February, India and France have conducted their first-ever joint patrol from the Reunion Island on P-81 aircraft to maintain the security of international maritime routes.

- Reunion Island is the French naval base in the Indian Ocean.

227. According to Ministry of HRD, IIT-Madras has filed the highest number of patents at 186 in 2019-20 and became India's leading technical institution in creating new knowledge.

- IIT-Delhi (152) and IIT-Mumbai (135) are ranked next respectively.

228. MyLab Discovery Solutions Pvt Ltd (Pune-based testing services) has become the first Indian company to develop and sell the first-ever India-made COVID-19 testing kits.

- Ms Minal D. Bhosale (Virologist) led the discovery of testing kit.

229. 5th edition of the 'Boom and Bust 2020: Tracking The Global Coal Plant Pipeline' released by the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA), Greenpeace International, Sierra Club and Global Energy Monitor mentions that 47.4 GW of coal-fired power projects at different stages were cancelled in India in 2019.

230. Centre has announced that medical insurance scheme for healthcare workers (announced as part of the Rs 1.7 lakh crore economic relief package) will be applicable to private sector healthcare workers as well.

- The insurance is worth Rs 50 lakh for an individual health worker dealing with Covid-19.

- Beneficiaries - 90 days insurance cover for around 22.12 lakh public healthcare providers, ASHA (Accredited Social Health Activist) workers, community health workers, and private hospital staff.

- The scheme will be funded by the budget of National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF).

231. Ministry of Tourism has launched the "Stranded in India" portal to support foreign tourists stranded in India due to lockdown.



- Function: the portal will provide information to foreign tourists about the steps taken by Indian and foreign govt to contain the spread of Coronavirus and take them home.

232. Extraordinary G20 Trade and Investment Ministerial Virtual Meet was held recently.

- India informed G20 nations that India is supplying medical products to nearly 190 countries in the world amidst the threat of Covid-19.
- 2nd Extraordinary G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG) meeting under the presidency of Saudi Arabia was also held.

233. Maharashtra hospitals have adopted a new technology named as "Scitech Airon" to fight against COVID-19.

- Purpose: It helps to control bacteria, virus and fungal infections.
- The technology was adopted under NIDHI-PRAYAS Programme.

NIDHI-PRAYAS Programme:

- It was launched by Department of Science and Technology.
- NIDHI stands for National Initiative for Developing and Harnessing Innovations
- PRAYAS stands for PRomoting and Accelerating Young and ASpiring technology entrepreneurs
- NIDHI-PRAYAS is a pre-incubation initiative to promote innovation in India.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

1. Conference on Enhancing Energy Cooperation in the BIMSTEC Region was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

- Organizers: - BIMSTEC Secretariat (in Dhaka) in collaboration with USAID-funded program titled South Asian Regional Initiative for Energy Integration (SARI/EI).
- In 2018, BIMSTEC signed an MoU for Establishment of the BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection to facilitate electricity trade among member countries. The MoU came into effect in 2019.

2. As per the 'Prospect of regional energy cooperation and cross-border energy trade in the BIMSTEC region' report released during the conference, India has the highest energy resources - oil, gas, biomass, hydro, and coal (98%) - among BIMSTEC nations.

- Total BIMSTEC region has 3.23 lakh million tonnes of coal, 664 million tonnes of oil, 99 trillion cubic feet of gas, 11,346 MT of biomass, 328 GW of hydropower and 1,117 GW of renewal energy.
- India has the highest 3.19 lakh MT of coal resources, followed by Bangladesh 3,300 MTN and Thailand 1,063 MTN.

3. 9th edition of Hurun Global Rich List 2020 has been released.

- Ritesh Agarwal (Oyo founder) has been named the youngest Indian in this list with a net worth of \$1.1 billion.
- He was 2nd youngest wealthiest startup founders in the world after Kylie Jenner.

Note: - In all the newspapers articles, the total number of billionaires in India is given as 138 whereas in the screenshot above (taken from Hurun's website) the number is 137. Therefore, it is a little ambiguous.

<https://www.hurun.net/EN/Article/Details?num=775CEFAE8BF8>

4. US and the Taliban have signed a peace agreement in Doha (Qatar) to end one of the world's longest-running conflicts after nearly 20 years of war.



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- It could result in American troops leaving Afghanistan within 14 months.
5. According to the 2019 report of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), released by United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), India is among the top manufacturers of illegal and legal drugs smuggled to other countries.
- Most of the tramadol (a controlled substance) seized globally between 2013-17 was originated in India.
 - UNODC has rebuked India for not submitting Form P which details about the mandatory reports on manufacturing, importing and exporting of legal drug and raw material data by the deadline.
 - Largest seizure in India: - In a single day, 8 tons of pseudoephedrine (used for decongestion) was confiscated in Noida, Uttar Pradesh in 2019, which is highest in India till now.
 - In India, seizures of amphetamine-type stimulants was highest at 931 kg in 2018. In 2016, 1.7 tons of seizures (highest so far) of amphetamine-type stimulants were recorded. Apart from these, the report mentions about various drugs that have been seized in India.
 - China is the lead manufacturer of phenobarbital (a type of sleeping pill) with 154 tons in 2018, followed by India and Hungary, at 87.2 tons and 32.3 tons, respectively.
6. US-based think tank Global Financial Integrity (GFI) has released its report "Trade- Related Illicit Financial Flows in 135 Developing Countries: 2008-2017" which ranks India at the 3rd position in terms of trade-related illegal financial flows of \$83.5 billion in 2017.
- Total number of countries assessed in this report is 135.
 - Total value gaps between 135 developing countries and 36 advanced economies during 2008-2017 is \$8.8 trillion and in 2017, it is \$817.6 billion.
 - In terms of trade of 135 developing countries with 36 advanced economies, India was ranked 6th (during 2008-17 and 2017) whereas China ranked 1st in both durations.
 - Asian region has the highest total value gaps in both durations in terms of trade with 36 advanced economies.
 - The three largest value gaps were identified in the trade of electrical machinery (USD 153.7 billion), mineral fuels (USD 113.2 billion) and machinery (USD 111.7 billion) between the 135 developing countries and 36 advanced economies.
7. World Bank will provide an assistance of \$12 billion to the member countries which are grappling with economic impacts of coronavirus (Covid-19).
- Priority will be given to poor countries that are at highest risks.
 - WHO has declared Covid-19 as a pandemic (means - a disease prevalent over a whole country or the world).
8. Freedom House (USA company) has released the 'Freedom in the World 2020' report, that ranks countries on the basis of freedom given to the citizens and democratic practices of a country.
- Total - 195 countries and 15 territories
 - Top Ranker - Finland
 - Bottom 3 Ranker - India, Timor-Leste and Tunisia respectively
 - India's Rank - 83rd along with Timor-Leste and Senegal.
 - Jammu and Kashmir's score (as a separate territory) has been reduced to 28 from 49. It has been shifted from 'Partially Free' and 'Not Free' category.
 - Parameters - Total 25 indicators divided into two categories of political rights and civil liberties.
 - A total of 37 countries improved and 64 countries' performance declined in terms of political



rights and civil liberties.

Scores:-

Each country and territory is assigned between 0 and 4 points on a series of 25 indicators, for an aggregate score of up to 100. Political rights and civil liberties carry (0-40) and (0-60) weight age respectively. The total scores determine whether the country or territory has an overall status of Free, Partly Free, or Not Free.

9. European Commission (a part of EU) has launched the Global Coalition for Biodiversity named as "United for Biodiversity" on the occasion of World Wildlife Day (on March 3).

- The coalition consists of national parks, aquariums, zoos, botanical gardens and science museums of the world.
- The coalition aims to boost public awareness about the nature crisis before COP 15 of Convention on Biological Diversity in Kunming, China in October 2020.
- The Coalition cited Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services' (IPBES) report that more than 1 million species are at the verge of extinction.

10. Luxembourg (2nd smallest country in the European Union) has become the first country in the world to make all forms of public transport free.

- Its capital (also called Luxembourg) is the 53rd most congested city in the world according to Traffic Index 2020 (covered in Feb Spotlight).

11. OPEC has decided to cut oil production in 2020 due to coronavirus.

- Saudi Arabia (major oil supplier in OPEC) has decided to cut its oil production by 1.5 million barrel a day from April 2020.
- OPEC+ has decided to extend its cuts of 2.1 million bpd, which means that the proposed combined total of the cuts planned would have been 3.6 million bpd or about 3.6% of global supplies.

12. 5th BIMSTEC Summit 2020 will be in Colombo, Sri Lanka under the chairmanship of Sri Lanka in September 2020. [Sri Lanka is serving as chair of BIMSTEC from 2018 to 2020]

- 17th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting and 21st BIMSTEC Senior Officials Meeting will be held before the Summit.
- During the meetings, it was decided that: -
 - Sri Lanka will lead BIMSTEC nations in the science, technology, and innovation sector;
 - India will lead BIMSTEC nations in security sector;
 - Bangladesh will lead Trade and Investment;
 - Bhutan on Environment and Climate Change;
 - Myanmar on Agriculture and Food Security;
 - Nepal on People-to-People Contact;
 - Thailand on Connectivity in BIMSTEC.

13. India has joined the Indian Ocean Commission as the 5th observer state.

- Other four observers are - Malta, China, European Union and OIF (International Organization of La Francophonie).
- Purpose:- Joining the commission will help India in its SAGAR (Security and Growth for all in the Region) policy.

Indian Ocean Commission-

Launched - 1982 at Port Louis, Mauritius.

Members - It has five member nations- Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Reunion (an overseas region of France) and Seychelles. [All African countries]

14. Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) has released the 4th Inclusive Internet Index 2020, commissioned by Facebook, that measures the internet access available to all citizens and its outcomes.

- Total countries - 100
- Top Ranker - Sweden (1st), New Zealand (2nd) and USA (3rd)
- Bottom Ranker - Burundi (100th)
- India's Rank - 46
- Parameters - four categories which are Availability, Affordability, Relevance (extent of local language content), Readiness (capacity to access the Internet).
- India's rank on each parameters - 68th in Availability, 18th in Affordability, 46th in Relevance, 12th in Readiness.

15. "Trends in international arms transfers 2019" report released by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) mentioned that together, the top five arms importing countries accounted for 36% of all arms imports during 2015-19.

- Russia is India' leading supplier of arms. However, its share of total Indian arms imports declined from 72% to 56%.
- Between 2010-14 and 2015-19, total arms imports by India has decreased by 39%.

16. World Economic Forum has, for the first time, launched the COVID Action Platform to strengthen the global response on Covid-19.

- WEF has launched this platform in collaboration with WHO.
- The platform will address the issue in 3 main ways: -

17. World Economic Forum has released its new list of 115 Young Global Leaders 2020 which features young leaders below the age of 40.

- In 2020, over half the new members are women and nearly half of YGLs are from emerging economies.

18. Animal Protection Index (API) 2020 has been released by World Animal Protection to rank countries on the basis of their animal welfare policy and legislation.

- Total countries - 50
- Parameters - 10 indicators divided into 4 goals:
 - Recognition of animal sentience and prohibition of animal suffering
 - Establishment of supportive government bodies
 - Presence of animal welfare legislation
 - Support for international animal welfare standards
- Top country - Sweden, Denmark, UK, Netherlands, Switzerland and Austria got 'B' ranking. No country got 'A' rank.
- Bottom country - Iran and Azerbaijan got 'G' rank.
- India's rank - 'C' ranking along with Spain, New Zealand, Mexico, Germany, Poland, Italy, France and Malaysia.
- The index ranks countries from A, being the highest score, to G, being the weakest score.

19. KPMG global Technology industry innovation survey 2020 ranked countries for their innovation

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adoption and promotion of new-age technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), blockchain, internet-of-things, among others.

- KPMG has ranked Bengaluru at the 9th spot in the list of cities which are going to become technology innovation hubs in the next four years outside Silicon Valley.

- Top 20 cities:

Top 10 countries:

20. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has predicted that coronavirus outbreak could cost the global economy up to \$2 trillion this year.

- It will cause a recession in some countries and reduce the global annual growth to below 2.5% this year.
- Coronavirus' trade impact for India is estimated to be about \$348 million and India figures among the top 15 economies most affected by Covid-19 due to slowdown in manufacturing in China.
- Slowdown of manufacturing in China could result in a \$50 billion decrease in exports across global value chains.
- UNCTAD has mentioned that FDI flows will reduce by 5-15%.
- FDI inflow in India was over \$318 billion between 2014 and 2019. In 2018-19, the FDI inflow was the highest at \$62 billion.

21. Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings by Subject 2020 has been released.

- It ranks the world's top universities in individual subject areas, in total 48 subjects.
- 4 Parameters - academic reputation, employer reputation, research citations per paper, h-index (both the productivity and impact of the published work of a scientist or scholar will be assessed).

Top 3 Universities (rank-wise) in different subjects and top Indian Universities: -

- Total 26 Indian departments entered the top-100 list for their subjects. Also, QS has seen an increase in the number of Indian programs ranking among the global top 50.
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) has emerged as the world's best- performing institution, achieving number-one in 12 subjects, followed by Harvard University with 11 number-one positions and University of Oxford with eight top ranked subjects.

22. 14th World Conference on Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion will be held from 8-11 November 2020 in Adelaide, Australia.

- Theme: Innovation, Engagement, Action: for a safer future
- Co-sponsor - World Health Organization.

- 22nd World Congress on Safety & Health at Work will be held in Toronto, Canada from October 4-7, 2020.

23. Bangladesh celebrated 100th birth anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (also known as "Jatir Pita", Father of Bangladesh and 1st president of Bangladesh) on March 17.

- PM Modi participated in the celebrations through video conferencing.
- Current Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina is his daughter.

24. Many environmental organisations have raised objection on the proposed Danube- Oder-Elbe Canal project which is going to connect 3 rivers - Danube, Oder and Elbe.

- It will provide an alternate route of navigation from Black Sea to Baltic Sea and North seas across Europe.



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25. 7th World Cities Summit will be held in Singapore in July 2020.
- Organized - Singapore's Centre for Liveable Cities and the Urban Redevelopment Authority.
 - Theme - Liveable and Sustainable Cities: Adapting to a Disrupted World.
 - This summit was held alongside Singapore International Water Week and CleanEnviro Summit Singapore.
26. 8th edition of the World Happiness Report 2020 has been released by United Nations on International Day of Happiness (March 20).
- Total countries - 156
 - Top Ranker - Finland (at 1st) for a 3rd time
 - Bottom Ranker - Afghanistan (at 153rd)
 - India's Rank - 144 (score - 3.573)
 - Parameters - GDP per capita, social support, healthy life expectancy at birth, freedom to make life choices, generosity, perception of corruption.
 - Gallup World Poll was used majorly to rank these countries.
27. UN Food and Agriculture Organization has released a report on Peatlands which mentions that though Peatlands cover only 3% of the earth's surface, they trigger the carbon that were locked in a few decades.
- As per the report, peatlands consists of 30% of world soil carbon. This soil has a potential to release up to 1 giga tonne of carbon.
 - Indonesia has 40% of tropical peatlands.
 - In India, 320-1,000 square km area is occupied by the peatlands.
Peat : - Peatlands are formed due to accumulation of decomposed plant remains. These plant remains stay in the land for years due to water-logging.
28. United Kingdom will become the first country to co-chair the Global Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI).
- CDRI was established by India in 2019 at UN Climate Action Summit 2019.
29. Heritage Foundation has released the 26th edition of the Economic Freedom Index 2020 to assess economic freedom given to these countries.
- Total - 186
 - Parameters - 12 aspects of economic freedom measured in the Index are grouped into four broad categories:
 - Rule of law (property rights, judicial effectiveness, and government integrity);
 - Government size (tax burden, government spending, and fiscal health);
 - Regulatory efficiency (business freedom, labour freedom, and monetary freedom); and
 - Market openness (trade freedom, investment freedom, and financial freedom).
 - Top Ranker - Singapore
 - Bottom Ranker - North Korea
 - India's Rank - 120th (score 56.5)
30. 46th G7 summit 2020, scheduled to be held in USA in June 2020, will be held through video conferencing.

31. USA has tested its first hypersonic missile - common hypersonic glide body (C-HGB) - which is capable of carrying nuclear warheads from its Pacific Missile Range Facility in Kauai, Hawaii.

32. International Telecommunications Union (ITU) has launched the "Global Network Resiliency Platform" to ensure that telecom services are provided to the consumers effectively in the wake of COVID-19 crisis.

- Function: The platform will share methods to provide flexible telecom connectivity to all.

About ITU:

HQ - Geneva, Switzerland

Secretary General - Houlin Zhao

33. FIFA has launched the "Pass the message to kick out Coronavirus" campaign, along with WHO, to raise awareness about Covid-19.

- A total of 28 celebrities worldwide have been chosen for the campaign. Sunil Chhetri (Captain of Indian Football Team) is also a member of this campaign.

34. G20 countries have decided to inject \$5 trillion in the global economy to fight Covid-19's impact during the G20 video summit (earlier the summit was scheduled to be held in November. It was conducted now to discuss Covid-19 situation).

- G20 President for 2020 - Saudi Arabia
- Theme - Realizing Opportunities of the 21st Century for all

35. Pakistan's 750-km missile - Babur II - has crashed to the ground.

36. US Space Force has launched sixth Advanced Extremely High Frequency satellite - AEHF-6 - (developed by Lockheed Martin) to provide effective communication facilities to its armed forces.

- Now, USA's Space Force has begun its first National Security Mission for strategizing warfare on ground, sea and air platforms.
- AEHF-6 was launched on United Launch Alliance (ULA) Atlas V rocket from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida.

37. Global Energy Monitor, Sierra Club, Greenpeace International, and Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air have mentioned that the global coal power plant development has declined by 13 GW of capacity construction in 2019 for the 4th consecutive year due to Coronavirus.

- 16% drop in capacity under construction and development was seen in 2019.
- According to the annual survey, 15 major plants have been delayed so far due to disruption in the supply chain and labour force availability.
- On the other hand, China's coal plant capacity approved recently at 6.6 GW (increased from 6.3 GW in 2019).

38. International Labour Organization released its preliminary assessment report titled "COVID-19 and world of work: Impacts and responses" which mentions that 25 million jobs are expected to be lost due to Covid-19 spread.

- ILO estimates the global unemployment to increase by 5.3-24.7 million from a base level of 188 million in 2019.



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- On the contrary, the 2008-09 global financial crisis increased global unemployment by 22 million.
 - Loss of jobs may increase income losses for workers to the tune of \$860 billion and \$3.4 trillion by the end of 2020.
 - Almost 8.8 and 35 million additional people will be in working poverty worldwide.

UPDATES ON 25 YEARS OF BEIJING DECLARATION AND PLATFORM FOR ACTION ON GENDER EQUALITY

39. United Nations has adopted a political declaration to fully implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action on gender equality.

- The declaration was adopted during the 64th session of the Commission on the Status of Women held in New York, USA.
- Beijing Declaration was adopted in 1995 to promulgate equality among men and women. 2020 marks the 25th anniversary of Beijing Declaration.

40. UNICEF, along with UN Women and Plan International, has released "A New Era for Girls: Taking stock on 25 years of progress" report.

- According to the report, girls still face violence and discrimination even after 25 years of Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995).

Some Observations of the report:

41. United Nations Development Programme has released the first edition of Gender Social Norms Index 2020 (GSNI) as part of the Human Development Reports.

- Total - 75 (covering 80% of the world population)
- The report finds out that more than 40% of the world population believe that men have more rights to get a job when jobs are scarce.
- Moreover, 28% believe that it is justified for a man to beat his wife.
- The analysis also highlighted a bias shift in 30 countries.
- Only 24% of parliamentary seats are held by women and there are only 10 female heads of government out of 193 Member States.

42. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has released an analysis "The COVID-19 Shock to Developing Countries" which mentions that the world will face recession in 2020-21.

- Leading exporting countries will witness a drop in investments of up to \$2-3 trillion in the next two years.
- However, the report states that India and China may stay out of the global recession.

43. Republic of North Macedonia has become the 30th member of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

44. NASA has announced to launch Sun Radio Interferometer Space Experiment (SunRISE) mission to study about the Giant Solar Particle Storms in 2023.

- Six CubeSats will be deployed in Geosynchronous orbit of Earth as part of this mission.

Significantly, the mission will study sun's spectrum.

- The mission is led by Justin Kasper (from University of Michigan, USA) and managed by NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL).



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45. U.S. Air Force has cancelled Phase-I of Red Flag (USA's flagship multilateral air exercise), scheduled to be held in Alaska from April 30 due to Covid-19.
- Indian Air Force was to take part in the exercise with its Sukhoi Su-30 fighter jets.

APPOINTMENTS

1. Abhay Kumar Singh has been appointed as the CMD of National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC).
2. Ajay Tyagi has got a 6 month extension as the Chairman of SEBI.
3. Muhyiddin Yassin has been elected as the new Prime Minister of Malaysia.
4. Pekka Lundmark has been appointed as CEO of Nokia.
5. Jochen Zeitz has been appointed as the acting president and CEO of Harley Davidson.
6. Sudhanshu Pandey has been appointed as the new CMD of Metals & Minerals Trading Corporation (MMTC).
7. Amrish Rau has been appointed as the new CEO of PineLabs (payment solution provider).
8. Daren Tang (from Singapore) has been appointed as the Director-General of World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO).
 - WIPO Headquarters - Geneva, Switzerland
9. Sanjeev Nautiyal has been re-appointed as the MD and CEO of SBI Life Insurance Company.
10. Anurag Mehrotra (MD of Ford India) has been appointed as the CEO of new joint venture between Mahindra and Ford w.e.f., April 1, 2020.
 - In the joint venture, Mahindra has 51% stake and Ford has 49% stake.
11. Nupur Kulshrestha has become the first woman to get promoted the Deputy Inspector General of Indian Coast Guard.
12. Lt Gen Kanwal Jeet Singh Dhillon has been appointed as the Director General of Defence Intelligence Agency.
 - Dhillon has also been appointed as the Deputy Chief of Integrated Defence Staff under the Chief of Defence staff.
13. Amitabh Bachchan has been appointed as the first brand ambassador of IDFC FIRST Bank.
14. P.V. Sindhu has been appointed as the brand ambassador for Andhra Pradesh government's anti-corruption helpline - 14400.
15. Sameer Aggarwal has been appointed as the CEO of Walmart India.



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- Sameer Aggarwal has been appointed as the CEO of Best Price (Walmart Inc.'s Indian cash payment business).
16. Latika Kundu has been appointed as the new CEO of Metropolitan Stock Exchange of India.
 17. Bansi Lal Bhat has been appointed as the officiating Chairperson of the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) for 3 months or until a regular Chairperson is appointed, whichever is earlier w.e.f., March 15, 2020.
 - Justice SJ Mukhopadhaya (first Chairperson of NCLAT) has retired on March 13, 2020.
 18. iQOO (Chinese smartphone brand and a sub-brand of Vivo) has appointed Virat Kohli as its new brand ambassador.
 - iQOO stands for 'I Quest On and On'.
 19. President of India Ramnath Kovind has nominated Ranjan Gogoi (former Chief Justice of India) as a member of Rajya Sabha (also called the council of states) under Article 80- Clause (3).
 - Article 80-Clause (3) of the constitution gives powers to President to appoint a person with special knowledge in Rajya Sabha.
 - Article 80 of the Constitution provides that 12 members will be nominated by the President in Rajya Sabha (which has maximum 250 members).
 20. James D. Taiclet has been appointed as the President and CEO of Lockheed Martin (US- based defence goods manufacturer) with effective from June 15.
 21. Ravinder Singh Dhillon has been appointed as the Chairman and Managing Director of Power Finance Corporation.
 22. Salesforce (US cloud-based service provider) has appointed Arundhati Bhattacharya (former SBI chairperson) as CEO of the Salesforce India.
 23. MS Dhoni has been appointed as the brand ambassador of the Khatabook startup.
 - Dhoni has also announced to invest in this startup.
 - Co-founder and CEO of Khatabook - Ravish Naresh
 24. Rajiv Bajaj has been re-appointed as the MD & CEO of Bajaj Auto for 5 years.
 25. Janani Narayanan and Vrinda Rathi were named as the members in the International Panel of ICC Development Umpires.
 26. Karan Bajwa has been appointed as the MD of Google Cloud India.
 27. Shivraj Singh Chauhan (BJP leader) has been elected as the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh for a 4th time.
 28. Anil Aggarwal has been appointed as the non-executive Chairman of Vedanta Ltd (his own company).
 - Sunil Duggal has been appointed as the CEO of Vedanta Ltd.



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- Navin Aggarwal will be the executive vice chairman of the board.

IMPORTANT DAYS

1. This year India has joined the 'Protein Da/ for the first time on February 27 to draw public attention, raise awareness, and educate India on the health benefits of protein.
 - Right To Protein - a national-level public health initiative - has launched this day in India on the theme of #ProteinMeinKyaHai.
2. National Science Day (NSD) is observed on February 28th on the theme of "Women in Science".
 - History: - On this day, C V Raman discovered the 'Raman effect' in 1928 for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1930.
 - Ministry of Women and Child Development has announced to establish 11 chairs in the names of women scientists across the institutes.
3. World Wildlife Day is observed on March 3 by UN.
 - Theme: - Sustaining all life on Earth
 - The date marks the signing of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in 1973.
4. World Hearing Day is observed on March 3 by WHO.
 - Theme - Hearing for life
5. National safety day is observed on March 4 every year.
 - Theme - "Enhance Health & Safety Performance by Use of Advanced Technology"
 - National Safety Week is observed from March 4-10.
 - National Safety Council observed this day to mark its foundation day on March 4 (1966).
6. Janaushadhi Diwas is observed on March 7 to mark the achievements of Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Janaushadi Pariyojana (launched in 2008).
 - Purpose: for creating awareness about the use of generic medicines.
 - Janaushadhi week is observed from March 1 to 7.
 - On the 4th day, an event for empowering the women of India was held on the theme of 'Suidha Se Sammaan'.
7. International Women's Day is observed on March 8 by United Nations.
 - Theme - "I am Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights"
 - Indian Railways launched a gender equality campaign on the theme of "Each for Equal" to empower women passengers and enhance the role of women employees in Indian Railways.
 - Indian Army organized a self-defence rally on the theme of "Stronger You Stronger Society" in Assam.
 - Smt Juppi Bordoloi, DSP of Nalbari Police (Assam), and a senior women officer were felicitated as women achievers of India.
 - Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) has prepared a report "Status of Women in Media in South Asia".
 - The report, sponsored by the UNESCO, has been researched jointly by the South Asia Women's Network (SWAN) and Institute for Studies in Industrial Development.



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- PM Modi has launched "She Inspires Us" campaign where he dedicated his twitter account to 7 inspiring women' stories.

 - 8. 15th edition of World Kidney Day is observed on March 21, 2020.
 - Theme: Kidney Health for Everyone Everywhere - from Prevention to Detection and Equitable Access to Care
 - World Kidney Day is a joint initiative of the International Society of Nephrology (ISN) and the International Federation of Kidney Foundations.

 - 9. World Consumer Day 2020 is observed on March 15.
 - Theme: - The Sustainable Consumer

 - 10. Global Recycling Day is observed on March 18 by Global Recycling Foundation.
 - Theme: - #RecyclingHeroes

 - 11. International Day of Happiness is observed on March 20 by UN.
 - Theme: "Happiness For All Together"
 - The day was founded by Jayme Illien (CEO of United Nations New World Order Project) in 2013.

 - 12. World Sparrow Day is observed on March 20 by the Nature Forever Society of India (which was founded by Mohammed Dilawar - an Indian conservationist).
 - Theme: I Love Sparrow. It is pictured as 'I Sparrow'.
 - House sparrow is the state bird of Delhi.

 - 13. International Day of Forests is observed on March 21 by UN.
 - Theme: Forests and Biodiversity.

 - 14. International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is observed on March 21 by UN.

 - 15. World Water Day is being celebrated on March 22 by UN to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 6 (Water and Sanitation for all) by 2030.
 - Theme: Water and Climate Change

 - 16. World Meteorological Day is observed on March 23 by World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and United Nations.
 - Theme: Climate and Water
 - Slogan: "Count Every Drop, Every Drop Counts"
 - Meteorology is the branch of science that studies the phenomena of atmosphere, especially as a means of forecasting the weather.

 - 17. World Tuberculosis Day is observed on March 24 by WHO.
 - Theme: It's Time
 - To Scale up prevention and treatments
 - To build accountability
 - To build financial sustainability towards research
 - To put an end to discrimination and stigma
 - To promote an equitable, rights-based and people-centered TB response



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- On this day, Dr Robert Koch discovered the bacteria causing Tuberculosis in 1882.
18. International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade is observed on March 25 by UN.
- Theme: Confronting Slavery's Legacy of Racism Together
19. Every year, "Earth Hour" is observed on last Saturday of March (this year March 28) by the World Wildlife Fund for one hour (8.30 to 9.30 PM) to draw attention towards global warming.
- WWF's annual initiative began in 2007 to encourage people to switch off the lights for 1 hour.
20. World Theatre Day is observed on March 27 by International Theatre Institute (ITI) to promote theatre in all its forms across the world.

AWARDS

1. AICTE Chhatra Vishwakarma Awards 2019 were presented to 23 teams to honour the innovative work of the students displaying exceptional skills in different categories.
 - The awards were given on the theme of "How to enhance the income of a Village".
 - Utkrisht Sansthan Vishwakarma Award is the 2nd category of awards given to 6 AICTE approved institutions to raise their performance in the specific domain to work towards a solution to "How to enhance the income of a Village".
2. Indian Air Force contingent and Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) have been named as the best marching contingent in Republic Day Parade 2020.
3. Jadav Payeng (aka the 'Forest Man of India') has won the 6th edition of annual Swami Vivekananda Karmayogi Award 2020 (given by My Home India) for his efforts towards afforestation.
4. National Awards for Outstanding efforts in Science and Technology were given in 21 categories.
5. Andhra Pradesh's tourism corporation has won the Best Eco-Friendly Destination - Maredumilli award at the India International Travel Exhibition (IITE) held in Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh.
 - Anurag Gupta is the director of IITE.
6. Swarajya Awards 2020 were presented in association with India Foundation and Indic Academy.
 - The award was presented by Minister of External Affairs S Jaishankar and Speaker of People's Majlis (legislative body) of Maldives Mohamed Nasheed at the 6th India Ideas Conclave in Gujarat.
7. 70th Berlin film festival 2020 awards were presented: -
8. Siddharth Kaushal - Superintendent of Police of Prakasam district (Andhra Pradesh) - has been awarded the National SKOCH District Governance Award 2020 for the Abhaya initiative of Prakasam Police.
 - Abhaya is a vehicle operated from 9 pm to 5 am to drop women from their home to their workplace or other necessary areas to ensure their safety.
 - In 2019, Prakasam district police had won the SKOCH Award for its 'Project JIO' (Junior Investigation Officer) launched to impart good investigative skills to the police personnel.



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- Siddharth Kaushal became the first police officer from the State to win the '7th G files governance award-2019'.
 - The award is given by G Files magazine - a national magazine on bureaucracy and governance - for good performance.
9. For the first time, an Irish and female combo - Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara - have won the Pritzker Architecture prize 2020 (highest prize in the field of Architecture).
- It is an annual award given by the Hyatt foundation (which was established by Jay and Cindy Pritzker).
10. Jadav Payeng (environmental activist from Assam), was named as the winner of 128th Commonwealth Points of Light Award for his service to environmental conservation.
- He is popularly called as the 'Forest Man'.
 - Points of Light Award recognises people across the 53 Commonwealth nations for their contribution towards society.
11. President Ram Nath Kovind has presented 61st annual Lalit Kala Akademi awards 2020 to 15 excellent artists.
- 61st National Exhibition of Art and National Kala Mela has been inaugurated in New Delhi.
12. Mint India Investment Summit and Awards 2020 were held in Mumbai.
13. 4th edition of Times of India Sports Awards (TOISA) awards has named Rohit Sharma as the Cricketer of the year and PV Sindhu as the Sportsperson of the year.
- Icon of the Century was given to Balbir Singh Sr. (hockey legend).
14. TIME Magazine has released the '100 women of the year' list to recognize eminent women from 1920 to 2019.
- India's Freedom Fighter Amrit Kaur has been honoured as the 'Women of the Year' for 1947 & PM Indira Gandhi for 1976.
 - Amrit Kaur became the first women health minister of India and also established Indian Council for Child Welfare.
 - Greta Thunberg is the Time's Women of the Year for 2019.
15. BusinessLine Changemaker Awards 2020 has been organized by Hindu Business Line (newspaper).
16. NITI Aayog and UN have organized the 4th edition of Women Transforming India Awards 2019 to honour a total of 15 women achievers. 1 jury award was also presented.
- Dr Praveen Nair (women) won the Jury Award for founding the Salaam Baalak Trust that worked for rehabilitation of more than 81,000 homeless children.
- Women Transforming India: -
- * Initiated in 2016 by NITI Aayog, MyGov and UN India to recognize women achievers of India.
 - * NITI Aayog's Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) has been organizing the awards since 2018 with a special focus on entrepreneurship.
 - * WEP was launched in 2018 to empower women entrepreneurs.

17. Ministry of Women and Child Development has initiated the 'Nari Shakti Puraskar', given to 15 women in 2019 to recognize their contribution towards women empowerment.

18. PV Sindhu (Indian badminton player) has won the inaugural edition of the BBC Indian Sportswoman of the Year 2019 award.

- PT Usha (Indian athlete) has won the BBC Indian Lifetime Achievement Award 2019.
- PT Usha was also named as the Best Sportswoman of the Century by the Indian Olympics Association.

19. Dr Jaimanti Bakshi, Department of Otolaryngology and Head Neck surgery at PGIMER (Chandigarh), has been awarded the "Best Citizens of India Gold medal Award".

- Reason: - for her contribution in the field of ENT diseases and head and neck cancer.
- Global Economic Progress and Research Association (GEPRA) has presented this award during the National Unity conference held at Chennai.

20. BBC World Histories Magazine' has named Maharaja Ranjit Singh (19th century ruler of the Sikh Empire in India) as the "Greatest Leader of All Time" in the world.

- Amflcar Cabral (African Independence Fighter) is at the 2nd spot, followed by Winston Churchill (Britain's war-time Prime Minister) at 3rd spot.

21. 3rd Hockey India Annual Awards for 2019 have been announced.

- Hockey India President - Mohd Mushtaque Ahmad

22. India's First Living Culinary Arts Museum - WGSMA (Welcomgroup Graduate School of Hotel Administration located in Manipal, Karnataka) - has entered into the Limca Book of Records.

- Founder of WGSMA - Chef Vikas Khanna

Fun Fact:

Limca Book of Records is an indigenous catalogue of achievements made by Indians.

23. iSportconnect (Sports business network) has released its 'Influential Women in Sport' list 2020 which includes Nita Ambani (owner of Mumbai Indians IPL team) in top 10.

- Gymnast Simone Biles was described as "one of the greatest athletes in the world"

24. Hillel Furstenberg (from Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel) and Gregory Margulis (from Yale University, USA) have won the Abel Prize 2020.

- Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters presents this award to recognise the extraordinary contributions to the field of mathematics. The award is funded by Norwegian govt.
- The award has been instituted to honour Niels Henrik Abel - renowned mathematician of Norway.

25. Zoya Akhter has won the IIFTC Tourism Impact Award 2020 held during the 8th India International Film Tourism Conclave (IIFTC) in Mumbai.

- Zoya has won the award for promoting world tourism through her cinema.
- K S Ravikumar (Director of Tamil movies) has also won the award.



26. Ruchika Tomar (Indian-American author teaching at Stanford University-USA) has won the PEN/Hemingway Award 2020 for her 1st novel "A Prayer for Travelers".

- The award was founded in 1976 by Mary Hemingway after the name of Ernest Hemingway to honour an American author.

27. Mirza Waheed has won The Hindu Prize 2019 in the category of Fiction for his book "Tell Her Everything".

- Santanu Das won the award in Non-Fiction for his book "India, Empire, and First World War Culture: Writings, Images and Songs".

28. Satyarup Siddhanta (from Kolkata) has entered the 'Limca Book of Records' for becoming the first Indian to climb the highest volcanoes of 7 continents.

- He has become the world's youngest mountaineer to climb both seven peaks and seven volcanic summits.

SPORTS

1. FIDE Women Rankings as of 2nd March, 2020: -

2. Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) has approved India to conduct Commonwealth Archery and Shooting Championships in Chandigarh, Punjab in January 2022.

- Birmingham Commonwealth Games (BCG) will take place from July 27 to August 7, 2022 in Birmingham, UK.
- The results of this championship will be added in the final medal tally of BCG.
- National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) will fund the shooting championship and Govt of India will fund the archery championship.

3. First edition of the Khelo India Winter Games 2020 - featuring three games: open ice hockey championship, figure skating, and speed skating - has started in Ladakh.

4. Ms Jiya Rai (aged 11) has become the world's fastest special girl to swim 14 Km in 3 hours 27 min and 30 sec in open water.

- She is a student of VI standard of Navy Children School, Mumbai.

5. Rafael Nadal (Spanish) has won the ATP Mexico Open 2020.

- Heather Watson (British) has won the WTA Mexico Open 2020.

6. Bred Kennedy (Australian) has won the New Zealand Open golf tournament.

7. Aryna Sabalenka (Belarusian tennis player) has won Qatar Open 2020 (WTA tennis tournament).

8. Women's Tennis Association's Ranking for 2020: -

9. Panjab University has emerged winner with a total of 46 medals (including 17 golds) at the 1st edition of the Khelo India University Games 2020 held in Bhuvneshwar, Odisha.

- Savitribai Phule Pune University was the 1st runner up with 37 total medals.



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- Dutee Chand (athlete) has set a new national university record for covering 200 m in 23.66 seconds.
10. Novak Djokovic (Serbian tennis player) has won his 79th career title by winning the Dubai Championships 2020 for the fifth time.
 - Dubai has awarded him a 'golden visa' to honour him.
 - Simona Halep has won the women's singles at the Dubai Championship.
 11. FIBA (International Basketball Federation) 3X3 Olympic basketball qualifying tournament will be held in Bengaluru, Karnataka.
 - Basketball Federation of India's President - K. Govindara.About FIBA: -
Headquarters - Switzerland
President - Hamane Niang
 12. Fed Cup Asia-Oceania women's tennis tournament 2020 will be held in Dubai, UAE.
 - Fed Cup Finals 2020 (sponsored by BNP Paribas) will be held in Budapest, Hungary, from 14-19 April 2020.
 13. Thiago Seyboth Wild (Brazilian) has become the youngest champion on Latin America's clay court 'Golden Swing'.
 - Thiago Wild also became the youngest Brazilian to win the ATP tournament.
 - Before him, Rafael Nadal was the youngest tennis player to win 'golden swing' title in 2005.
 14. Casper Ruud had won the 2020 Argentina Open (tennis) and became Norway's first ever ATP champion and youngest player to win an ATP tour in Buenos Aires (Argentina).
 15. ATP rankings 2020 (as of 2nd March 2020): -
 - Sumit Nagal is the top-ranked Indian tennis player at 127th rank.
 16. Asian Team Squash Championships 2020 was scheduled to be held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from March 25 to 29.
 - Asian Junior individual Squash Championship 2020 was scheduled to be held in Quingdo, China. Both the championships have been postponed due to coronavirus outbreak.
 17. FIH (international body for regulating Hockey) has released its world rankings for 2020.
 18. Mumbai will host the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) session in 2023. [The decision will be finalized at the 136th IOC session to be held in Tokyo in July 2020.]
 - This session will be held in India after 40 years. Last time, it was held in 1983 in New Delhi.
 19. Badminton Asia Championships 2020 will now be held in Manila, Philippines instead of Wuhan, China because of Covid-19 outbreak in April.
 20. Tasnim Mir (aged 14) and Mansi Singh (aged 14) have become first Indians to win bronze medals in the girls' singles category in the BWF Yonex Dutch Junior International 2020 held in Harleem, Netherlands.
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- Aakarshi Kashyap and Anupama Upadhyaya have won gold and silver medals respectively in the girls singles at BWF Kenya International 2020.
21. Prachi Choudhary (400 m runner) has been suspended by National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA).
 22. Sports Authority of India has launched the 1st edition of U-21 Khelo India Women's Hockey League in association with Hockey India.
 - Hockey India will organize the tournament in 3 phases at three different venues (capitals of Delhi, Karnataka, Odisha respectively) between Mar to Nov 2020.
 23. Kieron Pollard (West Indies cricketer) has become the first player in the history of T20 cricket to play 500 matches.
 - Dwayne Bravo is 2nd in the list with 453 matches.
 24. Hockey India has become a member of World Master Hockey (WMH) thereby joining 38 National associations to develop Master Hockey across the world.
 - International Hockey Federation (FIH) recognizes WMH as the regulator of international master's hockey globally.
 25. Pankaj Advani has won the 34th National 6-Red snooker championship held in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.
 26. Asian/Oceanian Olympic qualifying event 2020 (for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic) was held in Amman, Jordan.
 - Winner - China topped the medal tally with 6 medals (4 gold and 2 bronze).
 - India ranked 9th with total 8 medals (2 silver and 6 bronze).
 27. Nana Dzagnidze (from Georgia in Eurasian region) has won the FIDE Women's Grand Prix in Lausanne, Switzerland.
 - Harika, Dronavalli from India was at 6th rank.
 28. All England Open 2020 was held in Birmingham, England.
 29. 2020 ITF Seniors (age group - 50-55-60) World Team & Individual Championships will be held in Florida, USA in May 2020.
 30. World Athletics Council has fined the Russian Athletics Federation (RusAF) with \$10 million for breaching anti-doping rules.
 - World Athletics President - Sebastian Coe
 31. Sharath Kamal has won the men's singles at ITTF challenger plus Oman Open 2020 held in Muscat (capital of Oman).
 32. Manipur has created India's first ever all transgender football team.
 - Nick (captain), Silleibi (goalkeeper) and Lem (striker) are at top positions in the team.
 - Ya All (Imphal-based NGO) was started the six-a-side football matches for the transgender community 2 years ago.

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33. Indian Motor Sport Appellate Committee (IMSAC) has overturned a ban imposed on J. Prithviraj (president of FMSCI) from officiating in national championships.
 - The ban was imposed after the death of three trespassing motorists during the Rally of Jodhpur in 2019.
 34. ATK FC (Kolkata) has won the Hero Indian Super League 2019-20.
 35. Tokyo Olympics has been postponed to 2021 by International Olympic Committee.

MISCELLANEOUS

1. Katherine Johnson (famous NASA mathematician from USA) has passed away at 101 years.
 - "Hidden Figures" book (written by Margot Lee Shetterly) and the movie (with the same name) consist the details of Johnson's life.
2. Peng Yao and his team at the Ocean University of China in Qingdao has discovered the 8,000 years old Carbon inside The Yongle Blue Hole (YBH) in the South China Sea.
 - YBH is the world's deepest blue hole (Blue holes are marine caves filled with water, usually isolated from the ocean and don't receive fresh rainwater).
 - The discovery was published in journal JGR Biogeosciences.
3. Prof. Dorothee Huchon's team discovered the world's first animal - a jelly fish-like parasite named Henneguya salminicola - that can survive without oxygen.
 - Huchon belongs to Tel Aviv University of Israel.
 - The study is published in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences journal.
4. According to a study published in Astrophysical Journal, astronomers from the International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research in Perth, Australia, have discovered universe's biggest explosion in the Ophiuchus galaxy cluster (390 million light-years away from Earth).
 - It is the biggest explosion since the Big Bang.
 - Lead author of the study is Dr Simona Giacintucci, from the Naval Research Laboratory in America.
5. Eurasian Otter and Smooth-coated Otter have been sighted in Chilika Lake (largest internal saltwater lake in Asia), Odisha.
6. Jack Welch (former Chairman and CEO of General Electric - USA company) has passed away.
 - He was also known as "Neutron Jack".
7. NASA has named its 5th Mars rover as Perseverance (earlier known as Mars 2020) on the suggestion of Alexander Mather (7th class student).
 - Perseverance will be launched in 2020.
 - Sojourner, Spirit, Opportunity and Curiosity are the previous 4 rovers of Mars, whose names were suggested by school children.



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8. Minister of Women & Child Development, Smriti Zubin Irani, has released "Chronicles of Change Champions" book.
 - The book is a compilation of 25 innovative initiatives taken at the state and district levels under Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao scheme.
 9. Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik has released a comic book "The Adventures of the Daredevil Democrat" based on his father Biju Patnaik's life and work.
 - The book has been prepared by the Kalinga Foundation Trust.
 10. Tahira Kashyap has written her 4th book titled as "The 12 Commandments Of Being A Woman".
 - "I Promise", "Souled Out" and "Cracking the Code: My Journey in Bollywood" (Ayushman Khurana's biography) are her 3 other books.
 11. Apoorva Purohit has written her second book - 'lady, you're the boss!'.
 - Lady You're Not a Man was her first book.
 - In 2019, Purohit was ranked 44th in the Fortune India's Most Powerful Women list.
 - She is the current President of Jagran Prakashan Ltd. and is also on the boards of Mindtree, Midday Informedia Ltd and Music Broadcast Ltd etc.
 12. Articles of Constitution in the News -
 - Article 145: It details about the Rules of Court, etc. Law for Supreme Court can be made by Parliament. Supreme Court may periodically, with President's approval, make rules for regulating the practice and procedure of the Court.
 - Article 213: It provides the powers to Governor to promulgate an ordinance without permission of the President when both legislative assembly and council are not in session.
 13. Sadguru Patil and Mayabhushan Nagvenkar (journalists) have written the book "An Extraordinary Life: A biography of Manohar Parrikar".
 14. Bhalchandra Mungekar (Indian economist) has written "My Encounters in Parliament" book.
 15. Tarun Vijay has written the book 'Invincible' - a tribute to Manohar Parrikar - on the first death anniversary of Manohar Parrikar.
 16. 'Messiah Modi: A Great tale of expectations' book has been written by Tavleen Singh.
 17. Richard Cloutier (Paleontologist) from Universite du Quebec a Rimouski in Canada has discovered the origins of the human hand after examining the 380 million years old fossil of an Elpistostege watsoni (fish) which had finger bones in its front fins.
 - The study is published in the journal Nature.
 - The fossil was found in Miguasha National Park in Quebec, Canada.
 18. University of Cambridge (UK) has discovered the fossil of world's oldest known modern bird's (known as Wonderchicken) skull of 66.8 - 66.7 million years ago.
 - The scientific name of the bird is Asteriornis maastrichtensis.
 - The study (whose lead author is Daniel Field) was published in the journal Nature.



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19. University of British Columbia (Canada) found an ancient continent - North Atlantic Craton - was found to be 10% larger than previously estimated by geologists.
 - The chance discovery was made while studying diamond samples from Baffin Island - the largest island of Canada located in Nunavut.
 - North Atlantic Craton (an ancient part of the earth's crust) which ran from Scotland to North America broke up 150 million years ago.
 - Lead Author - Maya Kopylova
 - Published in - Journal of Petrology.

 20. NASA's InSight (Interior Exploration using Seismic Investigations, Geodesy and Heat Transport) is the first mission to study the deep interior of Mars launched in 2018.
 - Designed and developed by NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, the mission was launched on the Atlas V 401 vehicle.

 21. Chander Suta Dogra has written the book - "Missing in Action: The Prisoners Who Never Came Back".
 - The book finds out the issue of the missing Indian soldiers during the wars of 1965 and 1971.
 - "Manoj & Babli : A hate story" (True story) - first book of Dogra - explores the issue of honour killing.

 22. Albert Uderzo (French comic book artist and scriptwriter) has passed away. • He is the creator of famous comic series Asterix and Obelix.

 23. Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology-Dehradun (under DST) has conducted the study on the behaviour of glaciers in India since 1991 to 2015 on the basis of their length, debris cover, area, glacial lakes & snow line altitude.
 - These parameters were used for the first time in India to assess around 23 glaciers.
 - Findings - larger glaciers are thinning and smaller glaciers are retreating. Since 2000, melting of the western and central Himalayan glaciers has reduced whereas, melting of Sikkim glaciers has increased.
 - Reason - increased temperature.

 24. Savita Chhabra has written her first book titled "Legacy of Learning" (selected verses from Srimad Bhagavad Gita).
 - Savita Chhabra is the Chairperson of Hygienic Research Institute Private Limited (HRIPL).

 25. Satish Gujral (architect, painter, muralist, sculptor and graphic artist) has passed away.
 - "A Brush with Life" is Gujral's autobiography.

 26. Joseph E. Lowery (America's civil rights leader) has passed away.

 27. World's largest spiritual organization run by women - Brahmakumaris Sansthan's - Chief Rajyogini Dadi Janki passed away.

 28. John Maxwell Coetzee has completed his trilogy with the final book "The Death of Jesus".
 - The first two books of his Jesus trilogy are The Childhood of Jesus and The Schooldays of Jesus.